

THE GLORY OF THE 'BYZANTINE' – OTTOMAN CONTINUUM

ROMANITY, GOD'S NEIGHBOURHOOD ON EARTH



Christos Retoulas

The Glory of the 'Byzantine'-Ottoman Continuum

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on Earth*

By

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Nasche un greco, nasche un turco
(When a Greek is born, a Turk is born)
—Corsair Proverb, 17th century AD Mediterranean¹

Ὅπου πατεῖ Τούρκος εἶναι Ῥωμισύνη
(Wherever a Turk may step, there is Romanity²)
[to understand this and Romanity in general, one must be]
Ῥωμαῖος (a Roman³)
—Greek MP Georgios Typaldos-Iakovatos (1814-1882 AD)

The best Greeks are the Turks⁴.
—Professor Dimitris Kitsikis (1935-2021 AD)

The current Greek race is not the same as the ancient one. How could it even be that the Greeks of the time of the warriors against Persia were the same race as the pre-Homeric Greeks? With all its admixtures, the Greek soul was preserved quite similar to its original form... All in all, understand, O Romans!!!, that your race is new. Should this fact, i.e., that your race is new, give you strength? You have no one to blame if you do not realise that its admixture with other races is a good sign for its expected advancement. If your teachers pervert and make you weakly, smother them and open your eyes, O blind ones!
See what is really taking place...⁵
—Ion Dragoumis (1878-1920 AD)

¹ A proverb circulating among Mediterranean corsairs in the 17th century AD. (In Kafadar 2007, 14, quoting from, Weiss, Gillian. “Back from Barbary: Captivity, Redemption and French Identity in the 17th- and 18th-Century Mediterranean.” PhD diss., Stanford University, 2005).

² Typaldos-Iakovatos 1982, 17.

³ Typaldos-Iakovatos 1982, 4.

⁴ Kitsikis 1992.

⁵ In his 1911 book, *Ὅσοι Ζωντανοί* [*All Who are still Alive*], relating to his staying in İstanbul/Konstantiniyye/Constantinople.

Yet the Balkan and Asia Minor states enjoy great affinity with one another, more than our fanatical upbringing and education let us think. Generation after generation, our forefathers mixed and met in a way that, no matter how you classify us, [e.g.,] according to nations or states, [and] within each one of those classifications (there) are different anthropological types, yet you can easily distinguish us from the other Europeans or Asians. Generation after generation, our ancestors lived as subjects of the same state, the Byzantine one, for a thousand or more years; what is now the Ottoman one. So, we have so many common civilisational elements, that all together our different civilisations constitute a single civilisation type within the overall civilisation of the world.

—Greek Officer Athanasios Souliotis-Nikolaidis, early 20th century AD⁶

⁶ Souliotis-Nikolaidis 1984, 61.

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¹ “Yunan Profesör Dimitris Kitsikis ile Türk-Yunan Konfederasyonu ve Tarihi Hakkında Röportaj.” Wights of Salem. February 2, 2021. Accessed June 18th, 2023. Video, 1:32:50, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TLacvpaVdOI>.

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This is a book the core of which is occupied by my relevant DPhil thesis at the University of Oxford (1999-2003). Interestingly, in the very early 2000s, books concerning Akbarian theology and the presence of *tasavvuf* in the core Ottoman lands were in extreme scarcity, even in Turkish. And this

while the Roman Ottoman Empire was *the vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* country par excellence for most of its existence!!! – that would be partially changed with the emergence of Ottoman Islamism from around 1750 AD onwards. The mechanics of this folly was a blinding essentially Western-imposed dichotomy of a (supposedly) anti-Islamic militantly secular Atatürkism vs. a (supposedly) all-comprehensively-religious Islamism as the sole monopolist representative of Islam – a conceptual schema imposed after Atatürk's death in 1938 when unconditional Westernisation and its concomitant Islamism had started to take official root in Turkey. It focused on the 19th-century image of the Ottoman Empire, a period of Frankish-afflicted de-Romanising semi-colonisation, external and internal. Indeed, the road of Roman epistemology in the study of Islam and Turkish secularism that I have come to take has been and still is a very steep and risky uphill struggle which nevertheless bore much fruit in the end – Thank God!!! It entailed the augmentation of perception by fulfilling the 'either... or...' relationship into a 'both... and...' one without exterminating the former. What this meant in the end, you will apprehend if you stay till the end, from its *archē* to its *telos*. Nowadays, I am pleased to see that about 15 years after my establishment of the 'Byzantine'-Ottoman Continuum of Ecumenical Romanity upon the large commensurability between Orthodox Christianity and *vahdet-i vücud* Islam in the early 2000s, specific research in the field of Ottoman Islam has - since the mid-2010s - been pointing to directions beyond mere epistemological instrumentality. A sign of such hope can be seen in the mainstreamisation of the term, *Rūmi* in reference to the Ottomans, especially in themes of identity (religious, geographical, cultural, etc.) For example, in his doctoral dissertation (2016), *The Road from Damascus: Circulation and the Redefinition of Islam in the Ottoman Empire, 1620-1720*, Nir Shafir talks about the religious and cultural exchange between the Rumis and the Arabs. May one day it will be translated as what it is: *Roman*!!!

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Aeropagitis and Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn al-‘Arabī al-Ṭā’ī al-Ḥātimī.

I left for the archical *telos*, Georgios Soupionis who has remained a constant and unshakable presence and interlocutor in my endeavours concerning Ecumenical Romanity and His Life *Supra*. May God bless him and all that is his in thought and deed.

May the ZOË keep aeonian·ly in HIS Memory
the contribution of young Zoë,
who has recently walked into HIS Realm.

Christos Retoulas
October 28 & 29, 2023

READING GUIDE

“Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,¹
says the Lord.

Love the sinners but hate their works²;
and do not look down upon them for their defects,
lest you be tried in the same manner...
Force yourself when you meet
your fellow human being to honor them
beyond their measure.
Kiss their hands and feet, and hold them
many times with much honor, and put them
upon your eyes and praise them for the virtues they do not have.
And when you go away from them, then say whatever good and honorable
there is about them³.

Whoever asks you what you believe in,
Kiss their hands and feet,
Show them the answer.
Yunus, a straight way seems right for you.
Join with Truth now, resurrect with Truth⁴.

A perfected one in love, having reached the outmost/innermost of
impassibility, knows no difference between what is of himself or another,
or of herself or another, between a believer and an unbeliever, between a
slave and a free man, or not at all between male and female; but having
him/her become *supra* the tyranny of the passions and looking lovingly to

¹ Deuteronomy 32:35. The majority of Old Testament quotes are primarily from *The Koren Jerusalem Bible*. Jerusalem: Koren Publishers 1989 (KJB) (Hebrew/English). Otherwise, unless stated are from, *The Orthodox Study Bible*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2008 – as they are the New Testament ones (based on the New King James Version (TOSB) “Scripture taken from the New King James Version ®. Copyright© 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.”).

² Being them of the body, of the mind and/or of the human spirit.

³ Saint Isaac the Syrian (6th century AD) 2009, 178-179.

⁴ Yunus Emre (c. 1240 – 1329 AD) 1989, 82.

the common human nature, he sees all people equally, and he/she makes himself/herself equally disposed to all. In him/her, there is neither Greek [(idolater)] nor Jew [(unbeliever)], neither male nor female, neither slave nor free man; but all is Christ and Christ is in all⁵.

When something goes wrong, accuse yourself first.

Even the wisdom of Plato or Solomon can wobble and go blind.

Listen when your crown reminds you of what makes you cold toward others, as you pamper the greedy energy inside⁶.

Let no one take and extract a bare part from our words,
and, dividing it from the rest of what is written,
he/she holds it in his/her hands foolishly⁷.

When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both *the number* of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they *were*, was completed⁸.

⁵ Saint Maximus the Confessor (c. 580-662 AD), PG 90:993B.

⁶ Rumi 2003, 191.

⁷ Saint Isaac the Syrian in Saint Isaac the Syrian 1991, 304-305.

⁸ Apostle John the Evangelist's *The Apocalypse/Uncovering* 6:9-11.

PROLEGOMENOUS EPILOGUE

I am God,
and there is no other besides me,
declaring the last things first,
before they happen, and at once they came to pass,
and I said,
“My whole plan shall stand, and I will do all the things I have planned,”
calling a bird from the east and from a far country
those concerning whom I have planned.
I have spoken and brought it;
I have created and made it.¹

I am GOD,
and there is none like me,
declaring the end from the beginning,
and from ancient times the things that
are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall
stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling
an eagle from the east, the man that executes
my counsel from a far country: I have spoken it,
I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it.
I will also do it.²

This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, saying, ‘Not by mighty power nor by strength, but by My Spirit,’ says the Lord Almighty. ‘Who are you, O great mountain, to set this right [that thou shouldst stand erected (*τοῦ κατορθῶσαι*)] before the face of Zerubbabel? For I will bring forth the stone of the inheritance, its grace equaling My grace.’³

God is the Light of the heavens and earth. His Light is like this: there is a niche, and in it a lamp, the lamp inside a glass, a glass like a glittering star, fuelled from a blessed olive tree from neither east nor west, whose

¹ Esaias/Isaiah 46:9-11 (in Pietersma 2007, 860, translated by Moisés Silva).

² Yesha'yahu/Isaiah 46:9-11.

³ Ζαχαρίας/Zachariah 4:6-7.

oil almost gives light even when no fire touches it – light upon light – God guides whoever He will to his Light⁴; God draws such comparisons for people; God has full knowledge of everything –shining out in houses of worship⁵.

Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the seven lampstands *One* like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. His head and hair *were* white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet *were* like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance *was* like the sun shining in its strength. And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. I *am* He who lives, and *was dead*, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.”⁶

Pseudomonas savastanoi pv. *oleae* has been hitting the ecumenical olive groves for aeons - mercilessly. The noetic-cosmic altars of the world were not burning the golden virgin oil of the uncreated Being anymore: harlotrous smoky dazzle instead of feistily gladdening darkness, adulterous static-like movement instead of fidelious ever-moving stillness, repeatedly vacuous noise instead of all-encompassing sounding silence. To hear the fragrance, to see the voice, to touch the sweetness, to smell the caressing, to taste the light since

...all those who were deemed worthy in seeing with all their senses the All-Good [i.e., God affirmatively experienced via the uncreated *logoi*, the Divine Glory] and the *Supra*-All-Good [i.e., God negatively experienced (merely that He exists but not what He is at all)], the One Who is also Many, with the various senses as with one single sense, those who know the various goods of the One together as one in the various senses and by each one of them too, and they do not see them in [unbridgeable] separation, but they call the vision/*theoria*/seeing to be knowledge, and the knowledge they call

⁴ That Ligh is not a creature, not a created light for it is the uncreated divine Splendour/Glory/Energy.

⁵ Koran 24:35 (in Haleem 2005, 223).

⁶ Apostle John the Theologian, The Apocalypse/Unveiling 1:12-20, emphasis ours.

vision/*theoria*/seeing, and the hearing they call vision/theory/seeing and the vision/*theoria*/seeing they call hearing⁷

Was almost gone since gone almost was

“Stasis, or else, non-alterability in Christ [that] *supra*-natural state, the antechamber to and the steward within the uncreatedly energized Realm of God where exists “ever-moving stasis (for an unending enjoyment/receiving of things divine) and [ever-]resting motion (for an insatiable appetite for things divine)”⁸ As such, it is a divine Gift. As uncreatedness begets uncreatedness energetically human nature does not leave its root as human – O! Great is the secret, the mystery of God's ways – but they are differentiatedly encompassed wholly as spirit, intellect, and body (the three ones), or else, as soul and body (the two ones) without contradictions and homogenization. The gift of adoption of createdness by Uncreatedness⁹.

Humanity lost inkling of all this – the adversary forces keep tumbling it in the mud of a proud mind and a peaking body. Yet

without the olive tree there can naturally be no genuine olive oil according to the truth. Without a vessel, the olive oil cannot be kept. And unless the lamp is fed with oil, its light will go out. ... without an inner state, like a vessel susceptible to it, no divine noetic meanings can be retained. Unless the Light of the Knowledge bestowed by God's Gifts is fed with [their] divine noetic meanings, it will go out!¹⁰.

Healing, then, has been as vitally urgent as it was poisonously salvific. For

Honey tastes bitter to the one who is sick¹¹.

Death was crouching in all around but, through it, so was Life, if even only from a crack.

On September 12th, 2006, in one of the hardest hit and most damaged hectares of the olive orchard, a former Professor of Theology addressed an audience at the University of Regensburg. He claimed to be – at least, by his own admission - a follower of the ‘*Anointed one, the One covered in olive oil*’, the *Κεχρισμένοσ Χριστός*, or else, the Christ. His *Lecture* was titled, *Faith, Reason and the University Memories and Reflections*. Central

⁷ Saint Symeon the New Theologian 1988, 320-321 (Ethical Homily III:9).

⁸ Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 90:781C.

⁹ Retoulas 2022, 185.

¹⁰ Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 90, 1340D.

¹¹ Ibn Arabi (1165 -1240 AD) 1997, 164.

to his address was the theme of a destruction of a ‘synthesis’ which he called ‘dehellenization’:

The thesis that the critically purified Greek heritage forms an integral part of Christian faith has been countered by the call for a dehellenization of Christianity - a call which has more and more dominated theological discussions since the beginning of the modern age. Viewed more closely, three stages can be observed in the programme of dehellenization: although interconnected, they are clearly distinct from one another in their motivations and objectives.

According to this Frankish theologian, its first stage coincided with the Reformation and the late Western Middle Ages:

In all honesty, one must observe that in the late Middle Ages we find trends in theology which would sunder this synthesis between the Greek spirit and the Christian spirit. In contrast with the so-called intellectualism of Augustine and Thomas, there arose with Duns Scotus a voluntarism which ultimately led to the claim that we can only know God's *voluntas ordinate*.

For the German Professor, Protestant voluntarism essentially meant the ostracism of the Divine from human life:

God does not become more divine when we push him away from us in a sheer, impenetrable voluntarism; rather, the truly divine God is the God who has revealed himself as *logos* and, as *logos*, has acted and continues to act lovingly on our behalf.

“The liberal theology of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries”, the theologian argued “ushered in a second stage in the process of dehellenization”. As for its final third stage, it is still ongoing:

Before I draw the conclusions to which all this has been leading, I must briefly refer to the third stage of dehellenization, which is now in progress. In the light of our experience with cultural pluralism, it is often said nowadays that the synthesis with Hellenism achieved in the early Church was an initial inculturation which ought not to be binding on other cultures. The latter are said to have the right to return to the simple message of the New Testament prior to that inculturation, in order to inculturate it anew in their own particular milieux. This thesis is not simply false, but it is coarse and lacking in precision. The New Testament was written in Greek and bears the imprint of the Greek spirit, which had already come to maturity as the Old Testament developed. True, there are elements in the evolution of the early Church which do not have to be integrated into all cultures. Nonetheless, the fundamental decisions made about the relationship between

faith and the use of human reason are part of the faith itself; they are developments consonant with the nature of faith itself.

There is no doubt that the attempt to put Hellenity centre-stage in approaching Christianity was to a large degree refreshing – especially in the framework of the early 21st-century Western theology. Yet it would have been truly refreshing if it had not been internally and historically distorting as far as Christianity is concerned. The speaker: the head of *soi-disant* 'Roman Catholicism', Pope Benedict XVI – the German born, Joseph Aloisius Ratzinger (1927-1922 AD) - an expert on the thought-school of Augustine of Hippo (354-430 AD).

If, as the Pope of the Franks described it, this was roughly what could be said about the West's post-'dehellenization' theological quagmire, no doubt one should have to look at its (supposedly) 'Hellenized' period? For "dehellenization" to exist, it must have been preceded by some form of 'Hellenisation'. In the eyes of this preeminent Frankish theologian, Christianity, Hellenity, Romanity and their *Ecumene* were intrinsically interconnected in some form, albeit a specific one which incorporates secularity too:

This inner rapprochement between Biblical faith and Greek philosophical inquiry was an event of decisive importance not only from the standpoint of the history of religions, but also from that of world history - it is an event which concerns us even today. Given this convergence, it is not surprising that *Christianity*, despite its origins and some significant developments in the East, *finally took on its historically decisive character in Europe*. We can also express this the other way around: this convergence, with the subsequent addition of the Roman heritage, created Europe and remains the foundation of what can rightly be called Europe.

And it is exactly at this critical point, i.e., circa 800 AD, where the West's apostasy from Christianity begins in earnest by way of that 'decisive character.'

The questions which emerge from the Pope's *Lecture* both in relation to his own creed as well as to its post-Reformation Western theological siblings are indeed multiple and inter-related. To begin with, was it that, as the Pope argues, while it initially emerged in the East, Christianity found its theological *telos* in the Pope's 'Europe', i.e., Western Frankish Europe? And, since 'Hellenisation' occupies such a central position in his argument, how true to the 'Hellenic-Roman heritage' was the character that Christianity took in the Frankish West later on? Did the Frankish West ever understand the Greek philosophers in this respect? In other words, to what

degree - if any – did the Pope’s argumentation correspond to the nature and history of Christianity in light of his own criteria?

At a more fundamental yet related level, can indeed Christianity be healthily subjected to thought categories like ‘development’ and ‘evolution’ in relation to the primordial dogmas of the ancient and ever-living Church? And, if yes, in what sense, and, most importantly, in what sense of ‘dogma’ as such? Under what meaning and to what degree is this mutuality between ‘HellenoRomanity’ and Christianity warranted? And finally, how can one deal with the question of Christianity and its enculturation with Hellenity in relation to other cultures? How is it even possible for a post-Reformation theologian to intellectually form the notion of the New Testament’s ‘simple message’ as such - let alone attempt to ‘retrieve’ its real meaning - without an antecedent to that enculturation with Hellenity? In other words, is the existence of the indeed essentialist notion of ‘a simple message’ in itself conditioned upon certain pre-existing categories present in modern Western (Frankish) thought? And if one sets out to enquire of Christianity and Hellenity in this perspective, what about that of Christianity in relation to Judaity as well? What about the enculturation vis-à-vis Judaity? In other words, what about the relation between Christianity and Judaic culture(s)? Does there likewise exist in Judaism this ‘simple message’ of the New Testament? For if post-Reformation Western theologians are entitled to form the notion of Christianity’s ‘simple message’ before and in counter-relation to Hellenity (which they perceive as an external factor to the former), undoubtedly the same question can be legitimately asked vis-a-vis Judaity (as an externality) as well. For if the participants themselves could do so unproblematically then no reason prevents us from doing likewise. No other than Apostle Paul sets both Judaity and Hellenity as being at odds with Christ – along with them both being concordant with Him:

For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men¹².

All these paths need to be walked upon before our journey reaches its *telos*... – alias, its true beginning, its real *archē*...

¹² 1 Corinthians 1:22-25.

Christianity: The Deep Heart of Romanity¹³

Apostasy (ἀποστασία, or ἀπόστασις) is a compound from Greek ἀπό- “apo, from, away from, far off” and ἵστημι (*istimi*, standing, standing still): a standing away from, a distancing. In its fullest theological meaning, apostasy means losing, standing away from, rejecting ontological *Stasis* (στάσις, standing still, stillness, *standing stone*). Without Stasis, you cannot proceed to that which comes μετά (*meta*, after), which results from ἐκ (*ek*, from) *Stasis*: Ἐκστασις (*Ec-Stasis*); Stasis, Silence/Hesychia, Stillness, Quietness, Rest, ἡσυχία, Κατάπαυση, Ἡσυχία: the prerequisite of all true being in the energetically uncreated *Supra* Realms of the Only Real Being; *Theosis*, or biblically, *Glorification*: you being with the only truly Uncreated One by nature, you as an uncreated one by uncreated energy/operation. Neither poisonous meditative ecstasy as theological *telos*, nor the fantasy of the mind and/or the body but true ecstasy in *theosis*:

A fantasy is a deceit of the eyes when the intellect is asleep.

A fantasy is an ecstasy of the *nous* when the body is awake.

A fantasy is a vision-*theoria* possessing no underlying reality¹⁴.

Neither nirvana-like pseudo-vacuums that are nothing but nests of the proudness-based created light of human created nature and energies and/or the dwelling of the demons appearing as light¹⁵ nor the emptiness as they purposefully deceive by false appearance or stealth. For true ecstasy is not one outside the body but one moving towards the *nous*, i.e., the noetic heart in the body; without bodily Entrance into the Noetic/Intelligible Ocean, followed by noetic Entrance into the Cardiac Land of Silence, no one can proceed to the Cardiac Entrance into *Supraness*. From where human *autexousiotis* (αὐτεξουσιότης, not mere free-will but also free enactment) to right and wrong is a legitimate human prerogative by divine fiat, i.e., the Realm of physics and metaphysics, or else, the world of the knowledge of the Tree of Good and evil, to where human *autexousiotis* reigns supreme in the divine Realm of the Tree of Life that is the Theanthropos IC XC, the Realm of *Supraness*, the Domains of Uncreatedness. From physics and metaphysics, to *Supra* metaphysics and physics - the Life *supra*, Rumi (1207-1273 AD)'s “land beyond good and evil”.

¹³ Most of this section is a compilation from our work, *God's Gift, World's Deception: Dr Eben Alexander's Proof of Heaven in the Light of the Real*. Zurich: Lit Verlag, 2022.

¹⁴ Saint John Climacus (c. 579-649 AD) 2014, 63.

¹⁵ 2 Corinthians 11:14.

And what do we mean when we say “the *nous* in the heart”? Here we mean: According to the Fathers, we know that the heart is a natural, *supra*-natural¹⁶, and para-natural¹⁷ centre. Thus, there exists the spiritual heart in the heart of the flesh, the soul, and in the soul, there exists the soul of our souls, the Divine Grace, the traveling together on the way of virtue and eternal life¹⁸.

Note here that, in many instances, the faculty of *nous* is used to designate the noeric heart as such as well. In fact, the human faculty of Union, or, the heart, or, uncreatedly/uncreated Imagination, is the faculty of Becoming, *supra*. “[A]s Saint Kallistos Aggelikoudes [(late 14th century AD)] writes – “...the all-embracing [organ, faculty, point] of all the powers [/energies/operations] of the soul”¹⁹: *the heart*. Indeed, the human heart constitutes the existential assembling point of the human whole (body-intelligible-spiritual), the entrance and distributive point of uncreated divine energy: the bridal chamber of the consummation of the marriage between the Divine and the human. More often than not (terminologically not exclusively²⁰) in the writings of the arrived ones, this human faculty and power of the soul is described as the faculty of Union, the heart, the heart of the soul, or the *nous* (*νοῦς*): it is the inner human being. As the Prophet-King and Theofather David informs us:

...the inward of man, and the heart, is deep (קִּימָה לִבִּי וְקִימָה לְבָרִי)²¹.

Apostle Paul follows with the same line of being²².

This ‘deep heart’ is not to be conflated with the intellect, or, the contemplative mind, i.e., thoughts and/or emotions for:

...the [Christian] tradition does not attribute emotions to the heart [or *nous*; the human faculty which interfaces with the Divine]. The association of emotions with the heart is a literary invention that gained heightened popularity from the Romantic era onwards. It is interesting to note that

¹⁶ Matthew 6:21.

¹⁷ Matthew 15:19.

¹⁸ Saint and Bishop, Theophan the Recluse (1815-1894 AD) in *Collective Work* (Noeric Athletics) 2007, 142.

¹⁹ Saint Kallistos Aggelikoudes n.d., 95.

²⁰ For ontological reasons, sometimes the terms, *nous*, human spirit, and heart can be used interchangeably; other times the heart can be identified with the spirit of the *nous* (with *nous* equaling the soul) (Ephesians 4:23) and so on – see, Metropolitan Hierotheos (Vlachos) 2012.

²¹ Tehillim/Psalms 64:7.

²² Ephesians 3:16-17.

modern neurophysiology locates [the centre of] emotions in the intellect of the brain – exactly where the Franks had been looking for divine knowledge. Contrary to the followers of [Frankish] scholasticism, the [Christian] ascetics warn that the confusion of emotions [as we know them] with the presence of God and of the saints constitutes a deception by the devil²³.²⁴

“In the constitution of the human being, the brain and its energy operation (thoughts, *logismos*-es) act as the intermediary between the senses, and the spiritual ‘thoughts’ (*noesis*-es) that are centered in the noetic heart - feeding and being fed by both. As long as the human being dualistically sees the *logimos*-part as the *telos* for divine life “when the *nous* remains in the brain and is made slack/in-void-space, darkened and in [destructive] ecstasy [towards the world] becoming loose in its prayer”²⁵, he/she is doomed as they are also when he/she considers *noesis*-es that is energized according to human nature as *telos* too. To be with God in His Realm, all this must be uncreatedly energized through a deadening to be born *supra* anew”²⁶. “Since there is an ontological ever-link between soul and body, any attempt for the soul as spirit, intellect, mind, etc. to ‘escape’ the body totally is a fantasy that, in reality, leads to the rebellion of the body against the soul, pushing the person into the abyss of inner ontological in-fighting of a Manichean nature – and the reverse is also true.

You are mainstream·ly taught that the body is the prison of the soul – a Gnostic precept. Notwithstanding that the soul is a higher existent than the body (as the latter ‘neighbors’ more to non-being), this teaching is wrong. Do not sleep with a blind one lest you wake up cross-eyed, as the Turco-Greek proverb says. Or else,

woe to the worthless shepherd who forsakes the flock! The sword²⁷ shall be upon his arm, and upon his right-eye: his arm shall be tied up, and his right eye shall be darkened²⁸.

For if the body is the prison of the soul, the soul can equally – and even worse – be the prison of the body. For when the soul is drunken from its own natural created light, or from the deadly power-drink of hellish demons and their realm that deceitfully appears to it as light and/or– as,

²³ Dounetas 2010 b., 15.

²⁴ Retoulas 2022, 45-46.

²⁵ Saint Gregory of Sinai (c. 1260s-1346 AD) in Saint Nicetas Stethatos *et al.* 1996, 492-493.

²⁶ Retoulas 2022, 218.

²⁷ The Apocalypse/Unveiling 1:16.

²⁸ Zekharya/Zechariah 11:17.

he said, “What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”²⁹

- then, the soul fantasizes itself of already being in the Realm of God, then the soul becomes the stumbling block of the body towards the uncreated Realm of God. For as the Psalmist attests:

And again, O GOD, thou art my GOD ; earnestly I seek thee : my soul thirsts for thee, my flesh longs for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is³⁰.

Not only the soul but also the flesh seeks God.

And after they live behind the non-reasonable opinion that the souls preexist from the bodies, they will believe with us the Lord who says that those who are risen in the resurrection cannot die due to the clearer unveiling and participation of that which is ultimately sought after. And again, “whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.”³¹ If that had already happened sometime in the past, it would have been impossible, as we have already proven, to them be subjected to any type of death according to any kind of alterability³².

So, this type of out-of-body ecstasy is ultimately a deception of either the mind, demons, or both.

No one who hears should hope to see the Glory of God visibly by the sense of the *nous*³³.

And this is coupled with the following:

We should not doubt that when the *nous* begins to be energized densely by the [uncreated] divine Light, it becomes wholly transparent so that it sees [also] its own [natural created] light abundantly [its *logos*, and it is not in ecstasy (distance) from its true self]. This happens when the power of the soul totally conquers the passions [by the dynamic intercession of the Holy

²⁹ Mark 7:20-23.

³⁰ Tehillim/Psalms 63:1-2.

³¹ John 11:26.

³² Saint Maximus the Confessor 1992b. 108-109.

³³ Saint Diadochos of Photiki (400-500 AD) 1986, Gnostic (Knowledge) Chapters 36, 158-160 – nothing to do with Gnosticism here.

Spirit]... And that one who God energizes towards that by His Grace, *they are absent from the world even if they are in the world*³⁴.

From the whole world, visible and invisible...

Saint and Metropolitan Theoleptus of Philadelphia (ca. 1250–1322 AD) in his, *On the Secret Work in Christ*, writes:

Struggle.... by casting forth from yourself even the meanings/thoughts/spiritual thoughts of things ... become a stranger and run away even from the [created] *logoi* [naturally belonging to your essence] and what is appropriate to your genus [of your nature]... When you cause the outer distractions to be idle and constrain the inner thoughts, then the *nous* is risen in the *logoi* and the works of the Spirit...³⁵”³⁶

“From the created *autexousiotis*-ly self-willed human silence to the divine Silence of Uncreatedness that befalls upon a human being as a divine gift that is true and absolute mortification to the physical and metaphysical world, thus bestowing the true and the real Ecstasy by the fall of the uncreated Breath of the Holy Spirit upon the createdness of human existence. Says Saint Isaac the Syrian:

Love silence above all things. It brings thee near the fruit which the tongue is too weak to interpret. At first we compel ourselves to be silent. Then from our silence something is born which draws us towards silence. May God grant thee to perceive that which is born from silence³⁷.

This is the Birth into and the Dawn of the uncreated Realm of God while in this mortal world.

Autexousiotis-ly: because, as human beings are made in the image and according to the likeness of God, they not only possess self-will but, above all, *autexousiotis* (self-authority to materialize their free will)”³⁸.

For God does not make Himself appear on account of exertions in themselves but due to simplicity and humility by way of faith, of *theoria*³⁹

³⁴ Saint Diadochos of Photiki 1986, Gnostic (Knowledge) Chapters 40, 164-167, emphasis ours.

³⁵ Saint and Metropolitan Theoleptus of Philadelphia, PG143:385BC.

³⁶ Retoulas 2022, 187-190.

³⁷ Saint Isaac the Syrian (in Wensinck 1923, 302).

³⁸ Retoulas 2022, 28.

³⁹ This does not mean that exertions and works are unnecessary and obsolete wholesale. Perish the thought. This is so only when they are erroneously performed as

... the Door of the Mysteries⁴⁰.

“Vomiting the concocted sabbaths for the true Sabbath of your Life – in the presence of Life Himself.

Sabbath is the complete/perfect inaction of the passions and the universal stillness of the movements of the intellect ... the complete/perfect passing towards the divine, that reaches (as far as it is permitted) the one who practices virtue and knowledge, and when there [at the passing] one must neither feed its intellect with any material that lightens up the passions nor meditate at all upon the *logoi* of nature, so that we do not theorize as the Greeks do that God takes pleasure in the passions or that He is measured with the limits/rule of [human] nature [(by the human spirit and intellect)], Him Who only the complete/perfect silence cries Him aloud and Who is furnished by the utter *supralative* unknowability⁴¹.

And if this is so for the Greeks, the same [goes] for “the fleshly Jews, i.e., the corporeal manner or thought that rule over those who are governed only with the letter of the law”⁴². Like all exoterists who live only by the senses or only by a legal bodily disposition, these are unable to realize the famine for things spiritual⁴³. And here we are still in the Biblical Judaism of the Roman Empire (‘Byzantium’). Babylonian Masoretic-Talmudic Gnostic Rabbinism as an intelligible food in its various recipes (Maimonides, Kabbalah, etc.) appeared in full force only with and after the rise of the Carolingian Franks. This food is nonetheless a diet even to the deadly aeonian intellect-based createdness....

True religious experience is not *via*, in, and by the intellect; it is not by acquiring a *super*-intellect. It is by being uncreatedly gifted a *supra* being. As Saint and Patriarch Kallistos II and Saint Ignatius Xanthopoulos (14th c.) attest,

this is precisely the stasis of the *nous* that is born to it by the divine grace, according to Saint John of Climacus, who says ‘the *stasis* of the *nous* is only of the Holy Spirit’⁴⁴.

a *telos* in themselves and/or when given an inner meaning by a spiritual/intelligible virtue that again finds its *telos* and does not point *supra* to virtues energized by and pointing to Uncreatedness.

⁴⁰ Saint Peter of Damascus 1996, 416-419.

⁴¹ Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 90:756C.

⁴² Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 90:737BC.

⁴³ Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 90:745A.

⁴⁴ Kallistos II and Ignatius Xanthopoulos, PG 147:757BC.

In Rumi's poem about *the Lord's Breaths*:

Partial Intellect [(rational/emotive intellect)] is a love-denier
It is never and knowing, but it not naught
The angel is Ahriman [(satan-like spirit)] until it's naught
Though it may be our friend in word and deed
When it comes to inner states, it is nothing
Nothing for it's not come to naught from being
Many are naught by force, since they are not willing
Spirit is perfect, and perfect is its call⁴⁵.

And Kenan Rifai commends:

But this spirit is a divine spirit existing in the human being as a trust. It is not the human spirit, that is, the animal spirit [hayvanî can], which is affected by cold, heat, dryness and wetness, which eats and drinks and gains strength from food and drink or becomes weak without them. This spirit is a light which has no need of any of those things and which liberates with its being only the human body from human nature and directs it toward the heavens and divine oneness⁴⁶.⁴⁷

Indeed,

No one can keep the *nous* inalterable [towards the Divine Realm] unless it is kept so by the Spirit... when the energy of prayer arrives, it properly keeps the *nous* by its side, gladdens it, and debars it from captivity. But it may sometimes happen that [even when] the *nous* is in the heart praying, thinking, it roams around paying attention to other things; for thought does not subdue itself to anyone, except only in those who have been made perfect by the Holy Spirit and have reached a state of total unscatterability in Christ Jesus⁴⁸.

This is the Hesychastic Prayer, the Jesus Prayer not only in the 14th century of Saint Gregory Palamas but even in the 6th century AD – in fact even much earlier:

And this is captivity. For the enemy transfers the *nous* from place to place.
...And pray to the holy name of God, saying, "Lord, Jesus Christ, bestow your steadfast love/mercy on me"⁴⁹.

⁴⁵ Rumi in Rifai 2011, 247.

⁴⁶ Rifai 2011, 251.

⁴⁷ Retoulas 2022, 184-185.

⁴⁸ Saint Gregory of Sinai (in Saint Nicetas Stethatos 1996, 502-505).

⁴⁹ Saint Barsanouphious the Great and Saint John the Prophet 1996b, 92-93.

In repetition,

...and unceasingly pray, saying, “Lord Jesus Christ, save me from the despicable passions”. And God will bestow His steadfast love/mercy on you, and thus, you will be strengthened by the prayer of the Saints⁵⁰.

Being in the *Supra* Realm of the Real Being is a reality that can be experienced, especially as a human goal in this present life in true humility. As Saint Colman mac Duagh (c. 560-632 AD) testifies:

‘My brothers, if you are willing to see the glory of the Realm of Heaven (*regni celestis*), you will see it now - in so far as mortals can see it’. And they answered: ‘Father, we want to see it for consolation’. And, the holy Colman lifted his hand blessing their eyes, and their eyes were opened, and they saw the glory of the Realm of Heaven - as far as that can be sustained. And Coleman ordered them that as long as he was alive, they could not say anything to anyone. However, they rejoiced with such exceedingly great joy from the vision as for the rest of their lives the spiritual and the heavenly fervor had been fulfilled, so that they could scarcely be restrained by the Abbot, belittling the labors of the present life for the ineffable glory that will follow, which they had partially seen⁵¹.

As to what the utter limits of being with God for a human being whether here or in the hereafter: these are the ontological confines of the human nature of the Theanthropic Jesus Christ; beyond this no human can pass since no mere human – nor an angelic being – can ever come into contact with the Divine Essence, i.e., God as He is in Himself.

Thus, as Saint Maximus says, when it is only in God, the *nous* receives openings/appearances of what pertains to God [i.e., the uncreated *logoi* round about God⁵²] and becomes in the true sense a theologian having worthily received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. When one hears about God, let them not think due to ignorance that what is named/said about God is God Himself such as [the names] goodness, bountifulness, justice, holiness, light, fire, essence, nature, power, wisdom, and the similar namings of which Saint Dionysius the Areopagitis speaks. God in Himself is not among any of the things that the *nous* is capable of circumscribing/grasping as He is indeterminate/indefinite and undeterminable. He cannot be theologized about in relation to Himself as such but only with regard to what

⁵⁰ Saint Barsanouphious the Great and Saint John the Prophet 1996b, 366-367.

⁵¹ Saint Colman mac Duagh, Vita S. Colmani Abbatis de Land Elo, 21, in Heist 1965, 216.

⁵² Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG90:985AB.

pertains to Himself, as the great Dionysius [the Aeropagitis (1st-2nd century AD)] elaborates to Saint Timothy, invoking a testimony from Saint Hierotheos. And it is more correct to speak of God in Himself as ungraspable, unsearchable, inexplicable, and as all that it is impossible to delimit/circumscribe [by humanly noetic energy/operation]. For He is *supra nous* and thought, and is known only to Himself, one God in three Hypostases, without *arche*, without *telos*, *supra* goodness, *supra* all praise. All that is said of God in the Holy Scripture is said with an eye on our lack of knowledge, for although we may know that God is yet, we cannot know what He is; for in Himself, He is ungraspable to every *logos*-possessing and *nous*-possessing being⁵³.

Which is why regarding true lived-out theology, i.e., being in the Realm of God:

...that which lies on the outside of this [state] is demonic deceit. For this one should be attentive and without having been consulting the [spiritual] ones [(the indispensable spiritual guide of the Way)], they must establish nothing of that which resides in their *nous* (*μηδὲν ὡς λογισμόν*, 'thought' whatsoever) whether good or bad – for we are ignorant of both. For demons take the form they will and appear as the human *nous* does, for the latter too is formed in accordance to its will and takes the color of the form/kind of thing it takes up to itself[/it takes into its hands]. Of course, demons do that to deceive us, while our *nous* wanders around searching for its *telos* ('perfection') yet without being based on the reality of the *logoi* ('aimlessly', 'unreasonably'). Yet, one should keep their [*nous*] in a fashion that is suitable to God, [i.e., formless, colorless, etc.], to the degree that one can [/that it is [humanly] possible according to one's personal circumstances (by way of *diakrisis* (discernment, discrimination)]⁵⁴.

Thus, in comparison with the Aeonian, both physics and metaphysics are equal traps in the death of Createdness:

As long as we have not passed beyond the limits of our own essence and of those essences which exist after God [[that are before God] (the essences that exist in Creation, i.e., going *supra* both physics and metaphysics (the fallen existential state of the seen and the unseen Creation))] by the clearness/purity of our *nous*, we have still not received inalterability towards virtue... Whoever has not gone out of himself and, in a way, out of all that can be subject to [human] thought/perception/contemplation, and has not been begotten in the silence, which is *supra* thinking, cannot be totally free of [dualist existential] alterability [between good and evil/bad]. Every

⁵³ Saint Peter of Damascus 1996, 136-139.

⁵⁴ Saint Peter of Damascus 1996, 338-341.

thought [/natural movement of the *nous*] presents multitude or a dyad/duality/binarity at all events. It is the intermediate relation among some extremities/ends as it binds together that which noetically perceives/thinks with that which is noetically perceived/thought. Thus, neither of them safeguards its own simplicity/oneness by nature altogether⁵⁵.

As long as you operate with human natural energy, you remain worldly divided/divided in this world, even when in the metaphysical realm; thought and thinking are inherently dyadic, entirely alien to Oneness – even if they have a semblance of unity compared to the world of the senses... Not only God in Himself cannot be the object of human contemplation – however high -, but neither does He possess thought; as the Creator of thought, and thus He is *supra* thought.

Every thought is of that which thinks and of that which is being thought/perceived/contemplated. Yet God is neither of those who think nor of those subject to thought/perception/contemplation. For He is *supra* to all this. If He indeed could have exercised thought, He would have ended up being Himself somehow [(wholly or partially)] graspable/defined/delimited/circumscribed [in terms of His Essence – something that would have made God “a composite nature”⁵⁶] either because He would have become bound to the relation with that which is thought/perceived/contemplated when He Himself thinks/perceives/contemplates, or because He would have become Himself nature-wise a subject of that which thinks/perceives/contemplates by way of the thought-relation with that which thinks/perceives/contemplates. It is left then to understand that God neither thinks nor is being thought/perceived/contemplated, but He is *supra* to both. To think and to be thought are natural to those that exist after God [in Creation, and not those who/that live around God in His Realm]. As every thought has a root in an essence as a property/quality, it also possesses a movement/energy around that essence in a specific manner. Thus, it is not possible for that which is absolutely simple and absolute to undertake thought/thinking, for the latter is not absolutely simple/has no absolute oneness. Yet God is utterly simple, an essence without a subject and thinking that does not possess a once-for-all subject. So, God is neither of those that think nor of those that are subject to thought, for He is clearly *supra* every essence and thought/perception/contemplation⁵⁷.

Note here that, properly speaking, the Realm of God is not identical with the so-called ‘Kingdom of God’; the later, the *Basileia* of God (*Βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ*) is the 8th Aeon, the aeonian state of the newly re-created Cosmos

⁵⁵ Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 90:1116AB.

⁵⁶ Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 90, 1116C.

⁵⁷ Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 90:1125CD.

after the Second Coming in which human spirit, intellect and matter becomes re-created, compatible with the uncreated energy/operations of the God-Holy Spirit in the God-*Logos* from the God Father: True Oneness. That is the meaning of the world being made anew as spiritual.

Two issues are to be emphasised here. First, those who partake either in the Realm of God or the *Basileia* of God always keep their *autexousiotis* intact; for God neither violates the human *autexousiotis* nor does He practices partiality; the difference with our present world is that here it is alterability between created good and evil that reigns; then, it is divinely gifted inalterability. And even in the later, the human being remains with his/her *autexousiotis* unviolated by God's Grace/Energy/Operation. For as the dweller of heaven almost at will, Saint Symeon the New Theologian (949-1022 AD), says about those in *theosis* even in the Realm of God – the pre-tasting of the *Basileia* of God:

Because they are no longer of themselves,
but of the Spirit Who is in them;
the Spirit Who moves them,
and It is moved by them⁵⁸.

And secondly, we should know that in the overall scheme of things:

Everything comes from God, both what is good and what is sorrowful and what is worthless. Some of them come through His satisfactory approval (*eὐδοκία/eudokia*), some of them for the sake of the [divine] *oikonomia* (*οἰκονομία*) [God's actualized plan for the salvation of humankind], and some of them through His receding allowance (*παράχωρησις/parachorisis*). The ones by His satisfactory approval take place when we live according to virtue; for it is God's will/desire that we pass our lives without committing any sin, living them in His reverence and virtue. For the sake of *oikonomia*, when we are instructed [by way of difficulty, punishment, or miracles] at the time when we are at fault and committing sins. And by God's receding allowance when we terminally do not turn [to God] despite the corrections. God's satisfactory approval as such is that all humans are saved... Again, God chastens us *oikonomia*-ly, so that 'we may not be condemned with the world'⁵⁹. There is no bad thing in a city that God had not permitted to happen ... for all these happen as lifters of sin.

And finally, God recedingly allows [them to be left to their own devices] and completely abandons those who *do not want* to pass their lives in sinlessness and who, having been instructed, do not turn to God but abide in wickedness; as it is written 'He has blinded their eyes and hardened their

⁵⁸ Saint Symeon the New Theologian (949–1022 AD) 1983, 562-563.

⁵⁹ 1 Corinthians 11:32.

hearts'⁶⁰ and 'gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting'⁶¹, so that they commit in praxis that which is improper, that is, He permitted this to be so on account of Him respecting human *autexousiotis*. 'And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt'⁶², that is, I will permit for his heart to be hardened due to his disobedience⁶³.

Thus, One Simple Personal Divine Will operating in a personal way *according-to-the-logos (ana-logous)* and the ontological state of all and each receptable.

The Lord Jesus Christ: The Rock and the Garment of Salvation *Supra*⁶⁴

The whole of Creation is in ontological need of the Mediator God-Man, the Lord Jesus Christ. Saint Isaac the Syrian (6th century AD⁶⁵) states:

[The Union/Being faculty] is not like other faculties caused by nature, however illuminated and purified. But I think — and this is true — that the mind of us, children of man, is to be conducted [only] by revelations and insights so far as to reach this essential contemplation which is the same as true revelation; without [the] mediation [of the hierarchy of the angelic hosts]], however, our mind could not be conducted. And our mind does not possess a strength like that of those high and exalted beings who receive all revelations and contemplation from the Essence, without an intermediary. But even they [receive these revelations] through *an image of the Essence, not from the Essence itself*. So that our mind also is in the same degree as the other classes, not able to receive revelations and contemplation of their own, without an intermediary, but only from Jesus who sways the sceptre of the Kingdom⁶⁶.

The Lord Jesus Christ: the natural Image of the Divine Essence.

⁶⁰ John 12:40, quoting Isaiah 6:10.

⁶¹ Romans 1:28.

⁶² Ἐξοδος/Exodus 14:8.

⁶³ Saint Athanasius, PG 28:1400D-1401AB.

⁶⁴ Most of this section is directly quoted from our work, *God's Gift, World's Deception: Dr Eben Alexander's Proof of Heaven in the Light of the Real*. Zurich: Lit Verlag, 2022.

⁶⁵ On Saint Isaac the Syrian (6th century AD), see, Protopresbyter Ioannis Fotopoulos', *Ἀββᾶς Ἰσαάκ ὁ Σύρος: Ὁ Ἀδικημένος Ἅγιος* [Abba Isaac the Syrian: The Wronged Saint], Athens: Ἐκδόσεις Τῆνος, 2010.

⁶⁶ Saint Isaac the Syrian (in Wensinck 1923, 134), emphasis ours.

Before the coming of Christ in the flesh among human beings, the *theoria* in the *nous* – within which the angelic order/class operates - and the sighting was not present in them authoritatively/abundantly so that they pass into the mysteries themselves. But when the *Logos* was incarnated, there a door was to them in Jesus – as the Apostle says⁶⁷.

This only if you ontologically stand conformingly on the Rock⁶⁸ and the Stone of Salvation *Supra*.

“If then Prophet Zekharya’s Zerubbabel is the *en-humanized* Lord Jesus Christ, what is the ‘headstone’ and ‘the stone of inheritance’, the grace of which is equal to the Grace of God? It is again the Lord Jesus Christ born to an uncorrupted virgin: the Virgin Mary who had been and remained so both before and after giving birth. For otherwise, when we take the word that describes the woman who will give birth to a babe ‘with-us-is-God’, ‘Immanu-el in Isaiah 7:14, *הָיְתָה עַלְמָה* to mean “young woman”, and not “virgin”, are we not mocking God Himself – and He mocking us? For there He says: “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign ; Behold, the young woman is with child, and she will bear a son, and shall name him ‘Immanu-el’”⁶⁹. And what a great sign our God would have then given us if “the virgin” would have been “a young woman”: a young woman would have given birth to a babe!!! – what an innovation!!!”⁷⁰

Although the Frankish Rabbinic scholarship (Masoretic, Talmudic, etc.) translates the word, *הָיְתָה עַלְמָה* (*hā-‘al-māh*), as ‘the young woman’, this is something that cannot bear the weight of even the lighter exegetical scrutiny. First, while the Septuagint, which translates the word as *ἡ παρθένος* (the virgin), predates Christ by almost three centuries, and as such is totally free of any Christian bias, the same cannot be said of the Ashkenazy Masoretic/Talmudic texts that postdate Christ by almost a millennium, bearing potentially and/or actually deep anti-Christ biases. Second, as we have just said, the translation of the Hebrew word as ‘the young woman’ borders on the laughable even towards God Himself!!! And even more so when the babe ‘with-us-is-God’⁷¹, ‘Immanu-el is designated as “*el-gibbor* (עֶלְיֹנִי)””, i.e., “Mighty God” (*Θεὸς ἰσχυρός*) and “*πατὴρ τοῦ μέλλοντος αἰῶνος*”, i.e. “Father of the Future Aeon” (*avi-‘ad* (אָבִי-עַד)). Θεὸς καὶ Κύριε!!! Allah, Allah!!! Third, all the references in the Rabbinic Old

⁶⁷ Saint Isaac the Syrian 1991b., 222-223; Homily 84 (Greek text) corresponding to Homily 27 (Syriac text).

⁶⁸ See Shemot/Exodus 33:14-23.

⁶⁹ Yesha’yahu/Isaiah 7:14.

⁷⁰ Retoulas 2022, 267.

⁷¹ Isaiah 9:6/Yesha’yahu 9:6.

Testament concerning the word, *'al-māh*⁷² are directly or by-inferring interchangeably synonymous with the word, *הַיָּלָה, bə-tū-lāh*, a virgin. For example, Bereshit/Genesis 24:43: “behold I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that the maid [*הַיָּלָה, hā- 'al-māh*] who comes forth to draw...”. But here “the maid” under discussion was Rivqa/Rebecca who was later to become the wife of Yizhaq/Isaac, i.e., a virgin. Bereshit/Genesis 24:15-16 reads: “that, behold, Rivqa came out ... And the girl was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her”. Fourth, even by Rabbinist standards, Shir Hashirim/The Song of Songs 1:3 reads: “The song of songs, which is Shelomo’s. Let him kiss me with kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine. Thy ointments are fragrant; for thy flowing oil thou art renowned: therefore do *the virgins* love thee”. Guess what word is translated as “virgins” here: not *הַיָּלָה, bə-tū-lāh* but *נָרוֹת, 'ā-lā-mō-wī*.

For it is a general habit of the Holy Scriptures to conflate the meaning of “young woman”, “girl”, “maiden” with “virgin”, as for example in Devarim/Deuteronomy 22:27, concerning the raping of a “girl”/“a betrothed maiden”, or in Melakhim/Kings I 1:2 when “a young virgin” is offered to the then old King David as his attendant – in both cases, the word used is, *נָרוֹת, nah-ar-aw'*. So, in Truth, even by the standards of Rabbinism, it is the Virgin who gives birth to *el-gibbor* (יְהוָה הַגִּבּוֹר), Mighty God⁷³.

Thus, Prophet Daniel explains,

...you kept looking until a stone was severed from a mountain, not by hands, and it struck the image on the iron and earthenware feet and completely pulverized. ... And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will establish a kingdom that will not be destroyed forever, and his kingdom will not be left to another people. And it will pulverize and scatter all the kingdoms, and it will stand up forever; as you saw, a stone was cut from a mountain, not by hands, and it pulverized the earthenware, the iron, the bronze, the silver, the gold⁷⁴.

⁷² Bereshit/Genesis 24:43, Shemot/Exodus 2:8, Tehillim/Psalms 68:25, Mishle/Proverbs 30:19, and, Shir Hashirim/The Song of Songs 1:3 and 6:8.

⁷³ For a detailed examination of Talmudic issues in relation to Roman Christianity (Orthodoxy) based on the historical case of Rabbi M. (late 19th century, town of Arta in Epirus, Greece), see Amvrazis, Nikolaos. *Ὁ Παββίνος Ἰσαάκ Μ. πιστεύσας εἰς τὸν Χριστὸν καὶ χειροτονηθεὶς πρεσβύτερος τῆς Ἐκκλησίας καὶ ἐκθεσὶς πασῶν τῶν προφητειῶν τῆς Παλαιᾶς Διαθήκης περὶ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ* [Rabbi Isaac M. who came to believe in Christ and was ordained a Presbyter of the Church, and the presentation of all Old Testament prophecies concerning our Lord Jesus Christ].

⁷⁴ Daniel 2:34-45 (Theodotion, in Pietersma 2007, 997-998, translated by R. Timothy Mclay).

“Says “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ” about Jesus Christ, “the stone which the builders rejected [yet] has become the chief cornerstone”... “Coming to Him as to a living stone”⁷⁵.

Anthropos declaims:

Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying:

“Hosanna to the Son of David!

‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD !’

Hosanna in the highest!”

And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, “Who is this?”

So the multitudes said, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee.”⁷⁶

And Theos writes:

I saw the Lord standing on the altar, and he said: ...On that day I will raise up the tent of David that is fallen and rebuild its ruins and raise up its destruction, and rebuild it as the days of old in order that those remaining of humans and all the nations upon whom my name has been called might seek out me, says the Lord who does these things⁷⁷.

And Theandric IC XC:

O You! Zerubbabel Who are “like a signet ring”⁷⁸ of the Lord; indeed:

How are we to magnify Zorobabel?

He too was like a signet on the right hand⁷⁹.

The Lord Jesus Christ: the Right Hand of God, the valiant Victor, Liberator, the Gate, the Life, the Father of the future 8th Aeon, the Love of Uncreatedness.

The right hand of the LORD is exalted : the right hand of the LORD does valiantly. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD. The

⁷⁵ 1 Peter 2:4-10.

⁷⁶ Matthew 21:9-11.

⁷⁷ Amos 9:1, 11-12 (in Pietersma 2007, 795, translated by George E. Howard).

⁷⁸ Haggay/Haggay 2:23.

⁷⁹ Wisdom of Iesous son of Sirach 49:11 (in Pietersma 2007, 760, translated by Benjamin G. Wright).

LORD has chastised me severely: but he has not given me up to death. Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go in to them, and I will praise the LORD : this is the gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter. I will give thee thanks, for thou has answered me, and art become my salvation. The stone that the builders rejected has become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save us , O LORD, we pray thee, O LORD, prosper us. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD, we blessed you out of the House of the LORD. GOD is the LORD, who has shown us the Light... for his steadfast love endures forever⁸⁰.

So,

...men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know - Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. For David says concerning Him⁸¹

the following,

...for David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself:⁸²

The LORD [יהוה YHWH] says to my Master [אדוני ADONAI], Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy foot stool. ... Thou shall be a priest forever, after the manner of Malkizedeq. The LORD [אדוני ADONAI] is at thy right hand...⁸³.

Says the Lord Jesus Christ in His pre-humanized epoch of the Old Testament:

Hearken to me, O Ya'aqov and Yisra'el whom I called, I am he; I am the First, I also am the last. My hand also has laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand has spanned the heavens : when I call to them, they stand up together.... Come near to me, hear this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there have I been: now the LORD

⁸⁰ Tehillim/Psalms 118:16-29.

⁸¹ Acts 2:22-25.

⁸² Acts 2:34.

⁸³ Tehillim/Psalms 110:1-5.

GOD, and his spirit, has sent me⁸⁴. Thus says the LORD, thy redeemer, the Holy One of Yisra'el⁸⁵.

The Holy Trinity at work: the LORD GOD (the Father), His GOD (-Spirit), and His GOD-Logos (-Me/the Son)"⁸⁶.

Christianity in Romanity and Frankism in Definition

A conclusive point of reference is due here. Roman Christianity is used herewith to refer to the ecumenical Christianity of the *One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Ecclesia* of the *Symbolum Nicaenum*, the Nine Ecumenical Councils sponsored by the New Rome and the Five Patriarchates of (Elder) Rome, New Rome (Constantinople), Jerusalem, Antioch and Alexandria, which after the fall of the Roman West to the Carolingian Franks survived only in the eastern part of the Roman Empire. Various terms will refer to it throughout our discussion, according to context, including Christianity (as such), Roman Orthodox Christianity, Orthodox Christianity, Graeco-Latin Christianity, Roman Apostolic Christianity, Roman Catholic Orthodox Christianity, ancient Christianity, for example. For this understanding of 'Roman', I am indebted primarily to Father John Romanides (1927–2001 AD)⁸⁷, regarded by many as the most important dogmatic Orthodox theologian of our times, or as Sopko calls him, the "Prophet of Roman Orthodoxy"⁸⁸. As in historical reality, the terms Ρόμ (Rum), Ῥωμαῖος (Roman), Ῥωμηὸς (Romaniote), Ῥωμαῖνος (Romanos, the Arab-Turkish transliteration of the same name) are used interchangeably⁸⁹. In his writings, Father John Romanides sometimes refers to the Roman 'nation', meaning the whole of the pre-dominantly Roman Christian peoples of the Western and Eastern Roman Empire. Although this might seem strange to modern researchers, it is perfectly legitimate and more than pertinent, as we can see from Saint Augustine's sermon on Psalm 58, delivered in 416 in Roman Carthage, in which he asks his congregation:

⁸⁴ So much for the cacodoxy of the *Filioque*.

⁸⁵ Yesha'yahu/Isaiah 48:12-17.

⁸⁶ Retoulas 2022, 267-269.

⁸⁷ Father John Romanides' family origins are found in Cappadocia in Central Anatolia. Before coming to Greece in the 1920s, his parents had lived in the village of Αρβησσός (Gülşehir), about 20 km from the village of Hacı Bektaş Veli where the tomb of the founder of the *Bektaşīyye* is situated.

⁸⁸ Sopko 2003; see also Hierotheos (Vlahos) (Metropolitan of Nafpaktos) 2010.

⁸⁹ Father John Romanides 1991, 69.

Quis iam cognoscit gentes in imperio Romano quae quid erant, quando omnes Romani facti sunt, et omnes Romani dicuntur?⁹⁰

For one to familiarise himself with the customary Roman ‘unity-in-diversity’ reality, he must transcend the strange and yet powerfully Frankish notions of ‘undifferentiated homogeneity’ vs. ‘homogenised individuality’. He also will have to overcome, as well as transcend, all mere absolutist dualistically intellected constructs that are so innately present in the core of Western epistemology (absolute ideal vs. absolute practice, absolute intelligible vs. absolute corporeal, absolute religious vs. absolute worldly, absolute abstract vs. absolute structural, absolute social vs. absolute individual, absolute legal vs. absolute military, etc.) as well as the internal mechanisms that in Western thought mediate between the two absolutes in the sense that they are mutually sustaining with and propagating the very absolute nature of what they connect, with those absolute categories of thought in themselves. How easy this is to overcome after 1200 years of imposition, domination and practicing is another matter... As for what today is called, Roman Catholicism, it is referred to herewith as, Frankish Catholicism, Franco-Latin Christianity, and Frankish or Western Christianity (with the latter usually including the Protestant creed as well). In truth, a more accurate description of it would be: Christianophanic Frankish Augustinianism with its Frankish Augustinian Religious Institution of the Philosophical *Kathólov* (Universal), i.e., ‘the Congregation of the Philosophical Universal’. Analogously, if you have an objection take it to Saint Gregory of Nyssa (c. 335 – c. 395 AD):

Do we ought to call the Jews ‘Christians’ because they too confess and respect the One Who we worship? Moreover, I do know that the Manichaeans carry around the name of Christ. What then? Shall we count them among the Christians because they are respectful to the name that we worship? Similarly, the one who confesses the Father and accepts the Son, and yet erases the greatness of the Spirit, is a denier of the faith; he is worse than an unbeliever and he has falsely attributed the name Christian⁹¹.

As it will become clear further on, the reference to Manichaeism fits hand-in-glove for the Western case; after all, the very foundations of what today is called the West lie upon, from the very perspective of Romanity, a very insecure, lesser and reclusive theological and above all intellected,

⁹⁰ “Who now knows which nations/genera/*ethne*/peoples in the Roman Empire were what, when all have become Romans, and all are called Romans?” ((St Augustine, ‘Enarrationes’ in Psalmos LVIII, s. I, n. 21:25-7, p. 744).

⁹¹ Saint Gregory of Nyssa, PG 45:1320AB.

Gnostic and not-Gnostic, Platonic and not-Platonic, Christian-like and not-Christian, I am and who I am (not), here and there, the speculative theologizing of the formerly Gnostic (Manichaean) Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430 AD) – as the Franks understood him and misappropriated his legacy his legacy and place in Romanity. At its doctrinal core, *a life of naked power in an utterly evil human existence*: a life trapped in the duality of physics vs. metaphysics (taking the latter to mean 'Oneness'): Eternal Death by worldisation (secularization) right from the beginning; for in relation to Uncreatedness the spiritual world is 'material'. And it would have stayed at that if only what followed had been simply the product of mere ignorance of the Way of *Supraness*, i.e., Christianity; yet it did not. From 800 AD onwards, the Frankish West have been waging a genocidal campaign against the Way of *Supraness* and Romanity by either direct physical extermination and/or doctrinal infiltration and corruption – both in religious and secular forms and epochs. In fact, Frankism would have probably succeeded in both if not for the conquest of the de-Romanising Paleologian 'Byzantium' by the Roman Ottomans, and more specifically by the Roman Ottoman Basileus Fatih Sultan Mehmed in 1453. What followed, i.e., the history of Ottoman Romanity, is a story that constitutes the theme of this book.

The Medievalist and the Return of Grand Theory

Let us now come to modern Western epistemology. In her well-known 1989 article on Colonialism, *Rethinking Colonial Categories: European Communities and the Boundaries of Rule*, Ann Laura Stoler asserted that "the assumption that colonial political agendas are self-evident precludes our examination of the cultural politics of the communities in which colonizers lived"⁹². There are several observations to be made that underlie this statement. First, as far as the fullness of its corresponding human self, the epistemology which Stoler refers to is clearly blinding, as it ultimately prohibits the colonisers to see the whole of their self as it becomes engendered through the agency of their perspective and actions. Secondly, this blindness also shows that the self who this epistemology emanates from pertains to a human type in which the human being remains subordinated·ly and intra·contradictorily divided against himself/herself. Thirdly, epistemology in the fullest teleological sense of the term pertains not only to the object of inquiry but, also and concurrently, to its subject as well. For the sources of these pathologies are founded upon a specific type of self. In

⁹² Stoler 1989, 136.

that respect, during never-ending and open-ended inquiry there must arise both its object and its characteristics, as well as the subject's self and its own specifics: that is, self and other-than-self in inter-encapsulation. For if this is not performed neither is there hope that the subject can be cured nor can the object be clearly revealed.

“*Ἀλληλοπεριχώρησις* (*alliloperichorisis*, *inter-encapsulation*): a central reality of ancient Christianity pertaining to a constantly linear, cyclical and spiral unifying inter-movement without violating the common essence and incommunicable individualities of its unified elements. By way of the continuous tripartite hierarchical inter-encapsulation of the spiritual, the intelligible, and the corporeal in uncreated divine Energy, the Reality of Oneness and the Unity of Being is generated, whether engendered in the Realm of God in His omnipotently satisfactory approval (the Tree of Life), which a human being has already existentially concurred to, or where human energy is still inviolately operating in alterability (the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and evil), accordingly. All being is founded on the inter-encapsulation of divine Incomparability and Similarity in uncreated divine Energy. Indeed, even the nature of prophecies is in line with this, for the critical and innate characteristic of a prophecy is that it both conceals and reveals simultaneously. And yet at the center-point of the untouchable touching of God-Being and the human being-world (physics-metaphysics)-being and the possibility of its engendering, lies a Unique Being: God as a Person and the human being as a person; God and man meet in the Person, neither mere essence nor mere individuality. Not accidentally in the enhypostatic Wisdom, the Lord Jesus Christ,

...seeing the heavenly and the worldly hierarchies/orders [(*taxis*, *nizam*, *ordo*)] and how these exist in a common and equal conjunction and drinking from the chalice of the heavenly wisdom to the point of drunkenness, you will [want to] drive out every other pleasure and sense⁹³.”⁹⁴

In his Introduction to German-Jewish Ernst Hartwig Kantorowicz (1895 – 1963 AD)'s *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology*, (Princeton 1957/2016), Conrad Leyser aptly wrote:

The King's Two Bodies today holds up a mirror to the modern historical profession. Its author's participation in reactionary critique of the Weimar Republic, and his subsequent attempt to mask the deep continuities across

⁹³ Saint Nicetas Stethatos 2006, 44-45.

⁹⁴ Retoulas 2022, 310.

his work, plays back to us our own story: the profession's complicated relationship with the nation-state, and our failure to escape it⁹⁵.

Leyser continues,

Across nineteenth-century Europe, historians put themselves at the service of political masters in return for professional recognition. ... They persuaded nation builders that what they had to offer was valuable in the training of citizens as were the traditional disciples of classics and theology – and therefore governments should sponsor the establishment of research institutes and university professorships in history⁹⁶.

And here enters the Medievalist:

Medievalists were pivotal in this transaction. They curated “the myth of nations”, telling the story of how, in the fifth century the Roman Empire ceded power to incoming barbarian peoples. This was the end of the ancient world, and the beginning of a new “modern” era. Rough and uncultured as these barbarians were, they nonetheless forged political structures based on recognizably modern principles of organized consultation, as opposed to the power wielded by the dynastic autocrats of the ancient world. The task of historians as researchers and teachers was to piece together the evidence for the process of national becoming. This all proved overwhelmingly successful: history as professional discipline was launched on a global scale⁹⁷.

As valuable as Leyser's exposition may be, it is only half the story – indeed less than half in the overall Roman scheme of things. For what has escaped the attention of Leyser is the fact that today's Western academia has been also suffering from a similar yet additionally complicated relationship to the sources and structures that now promote power-centric neo-Gnostic New Order Globalisation (in its various forms, e.g. monetary institutions, religious Pan-religious Ecumenism, etc.), replacing the past-century's 'New Order', the similarly neo-Gnostic Rationalistic Nationalism and its state - both Frankish in origin and spirit. In the larger sense, my work is an attempt to furnish the Frankish West with some new spiritual-intellectual resources, a fuller Panopticon – to use the name of the apparatus Charlemagne used in his Palace to spy on his guests (see, modern-metadata collection and analysis) - if you like for seeing itself truly for once from the outside (to the degree that such a task is inherently possible of course).

⁹⁵ Kantorowicz 1957/2016, xv.

⁹⁶ Kantorowicz 1957/2016, xv – xvi.

⁹⁷ Kantorowicz 1957/2016, xvi.

In this respect, it is as if the holistic and ‘in search of spiritual meaning’ approach of the late Austrian scholar, Heinrich Fichtenau (1912–2000 AD), the “cross-cultural comparative” insights of the late German-English Timothy Reuter (1947 – 2002 AD) and the farsighted ‘Eurasian Perspective’ of the British medievalist Robert Moore are, at least with regard to focus, intra-connectivity and breadth, along with the work of some Frankish forerunners of our perspective - as it is also the case with the balancing-oriented work of Janet Nelson. We should also mention here the ‘ecclesia’⁹⁸-focused works of Mayke de Jong. In his essay, *Medieval: Another Tyrannous Construct?*, Reuter says:

The implication of all this for the use of the term ‘medieval’ is, I think, this: ‘medieval’, both because of its origins and because it is too often used as a purely descriptive or conventional term, will not give much help to historians in a globalised world looking for insight through comparison. It may provide a preliminary filing system to determine what is appropriate for comparison, but it does not offer conceptual protocols which will enable us to carry out comparison⁹⁹.

In turn, Moore sets the balance to be followed,

...intelligent historical discourse sometimes requires generalisation, and intelligent readers understand that generalisation is always qualified, implicitly if not explicitly¹⁰⁰.

And de Jong gives certain indications of the possible pitfalls and points of warning,

Grand Narratives cannot be made to disappear. At best one can identify and analyse these persistent paradigms, locate them in the ideology in which [they] originated, and subsequently use them as tools to uncover significant discrepancies. But when present-day Grand Narratives correspond with those from the past, or have even emerged directly from them, it is more difficult to construct this ‘*inventaire des difference*’¹⁰¹.

There are two things to note here. First, the point of view of the inquirer has to be situated in such a location that it is neither too close, for extreme proximity dissolves the object into unconnected individualistically

⁹⁸ Whatever this means in Carolingian and, generally, in later Western parlance.

⁹⁹ Reuter 1998, 37.

¹⁰⁰ Moore 2007, 145.

¹⁰¹ de Jong 2000, 185.

constitutive elements that colour the whole perception with one of the particulars at a time (depended on our focus each time), nor too distant, for great distance forms the object as an undifferentiated that is dominated by the colour that is most widespread (magnitude). Secondly, the object itself has not only an external dimension but a dimension within the self of the researcher, i.e., the existence of the object itself and its mode is constitutively depended on the self of the researcher. The object is not totally outside the self but also inside it.

The Carolingian Frankish Extermination of Christianity in the former Roman Western European Lands

Let us now come back to Pope's argumentation. To begin with, he clearly points out some form of inseparability between Hellenity and Romanity. Indeed, as we will see, Hellenity and Romanity, in both their pagan and Christian manifestations, have always been identical meaning-wise, i.e., united in diversity as singulars expressing the same universal, the Roman *Ecumene* - and despite the centuries-long strenuous efforts of mainstream pre-modern, as well as modern, Western European historiography to canonise Hellenity and Romanity as basically antithetical: 'Greek vs. Latin'. In this framework, Hellenity is distortedly related to ancient Hellenic philosophy and later 'Byzantium', while Romanity with a purely Latin spirit only tangibly touches anything Hellenic, being at the same time in peaceful accommodation with its 'Germanic' conquerors, the Carolingian Franks. In his superb study, *The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization*, Perkins highlights how Western epistemology and politics are mixed propagating this Frankish paradigm in modernity:

...the European Union ... needs to forge a spirit of cooperation between the once warring nations of the Continent, and it is no coincidence that the European Science Foundation's research project into this period was entitled 'The Transformation of the Roman World' – implying a seamless and peaceful transition from Roman times to the 'Middle Ages' and beyond. In this new vision of the end of the ancient world, the Roman empire is not 'assassinated' by Germanic invaders; rather, Romans and Germans together carry forward much that was Roman, into a new Romano-Germanic World. 'Latin' and 'Germanic' Europe is at peace¹⁰².

It seems the fact that the EU was the Western part of the Empire which was permanently subdued to the Carolingian Franks militarily after the 9th

¹⁰² Ward-Perkins 2005, 174.

century and ecclesiastically after the 11th century remains an insignificant matter of historical contingency, expressed in such murderously soothing and mesmerising terms, like Carolingian *Correctio* or *Innovatio*! Although chronologically postdating the Carolingian Franks, even the most influential modern inquiries into the so-called fall of the Roman Empire are usually subdued to thought categories (anti-Christian and specifically pro-pagan) which originate in a Frankish not a Roman worldview. And if you are under the impression that this Carolingian Frankish mentality against the former Roman peoples of Western Europe is a thing of the past, simply observe the spirit of one of the articles of the global establishment's favourite international political periodicals, *Foreign Policy Magazine*, on the vote of the British people in favour of leaving the Frankish-led Brussels EU (Brexit): *It's Time for the Elites to Rise Up Against the Ignorant Masses*, by James Traub¹⁰³.

In truth, this historical conceptualisation is meaningfully valid only as far as one chooses to abide by the specific philosophical, religious, ideological and socio-political trajectory of the enslaved Western part of the Roman Empire to the conquering Franks of Carolus I (Magnus) (748-814 AD). In this contagious paradigm which has almost turned into a global epistemological pandemic, “‘classicist ‘Roman’ historians lose interest in the 4th century and throw in the towel in the 5th, while ‘Byzantinists’ generally begin with Constantine [the Great]. [Of course,] [t]his is a distortion brought about by modern prejudices, written by historians whom the Romans would have dismissed as ‘Franks’”¹⁰⁴. Moreover, “the epistemological effort of the Europeans to explain how and when the Roman Empire in the East became Greek or Byzantine is” similarly “baseless”¹⁰⁵.

During our research on the so-called Western European ‘Dark Ages’ (the period in Western Europe following the collapse of the Western Roman Empire), on the unification of the Merovingian Franks of Clovis (481–511 AD) and, on the fall of the Roman West to Charlemagne and his Carolingians Franks, we were astonished and, in part, rather dismayed, by certain predominating atavistic characteristics found in the relevant mainstream Western, mainly Anglophone, literature.

First, the degree of explicit and implicit control the Carolingian worldview and thought categories have been generally exercising upon the pre-dominant forms of modern Western academia is almost absolute. It is

¹⁰³ <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/06/28/its-time-for-the-elites-to-rise-up-against-ignorant-masses-trump-2016-brexit/> published on June 28 2016. (Visited on June 30th, 2016).

¹⁰⁴ Father John Romanides n.d.

¹⁰⁵ Father John Romanides 2002, 265.

not only that the Carolingian religio-intellectual construct constitutes a point of departure for even Frankish history itself but, in some form, it is an innate nucleus womb for Western life and thought, as well, that is still alive.

Secondly, whereas 'distancing' from all other forms of religiosity and intellectual traditions is generally called for and effected in epistemology, the empathy displayed for the Carolingian case becomes so fundamental and over-powering that it reaches self-definitional dimensions under which the self (both the medieval and the modern) becomes inaccessible, undiscernible, thickly veiled, lost from sight, crucially insulated and protected from any real substantial and organic interaction with its object. Yet, at the same time, this self remains the source of over-powering moralism and/or moralised commandments; or, overpowering normativism and/or normative power – depending on the historical period one looks at. It is as if it has been following the Carolingian distancing and ultimately its insecurity and precariousness-based spirit in that, as Flierman says,

One is hard-pressed, indeed, to find a group on the periphery of the Frankish realm, whom Frankish historiography did not, at one point or another, come to brand unfaithful. As already underlined by Richard Broome, accusations of rebellion and infidelity belonged to the standard narrative tool-set of the Frankish historian, applied wherever Carolingian claims of hegemony were challenged or Frankish aggression stood in need of legitimization¹⁰⁶.

The modern bipolar reflection of this essentialism in the mirror of the undiscerning and indiscriminate dualistic absolute is its pair: 'all are faithful or moral', 'all religio-moral philosophies are equally true', i.e., mere, undiscerning and unconditional multiplicity. Western religiosity, philosophy and epistemology usually forgets that both myopia (lit. to shut one's eyes) and hyperopia (lit. to open one's eyes in excess) are equal illnesses of the faculty of sight.

In that setting, the self and its inner reclusive court is nurtured and protected against contamination from 'the individual or the social other' – how Augustinian indeed!!! ... This mere 'distancing objectivity' meant total subjectivity to one's own operating ontological categories: in the medieval the Religious Reclusive Universal, and, in modern times, the Multiplicity of the Secular Reclusive Singulars. Ultimately, even the critical evaluations and antitheses presented in the various analyses stem from within and not without the Carolingian worldview – the work of Fichtenau (particular the German version) and also, that of Nelson leave some tiny openings to a more comprehensive approach; as Nelson informs us on one of the theme's

¹⁰⁶ Flierman 2015, 189-90.

Reuter touched upon in his inaugural lecture at University of Southampton: "All medievalists work, inevitably, within a national culture"¹⁰⁷.

For along with the pair of Universal-Singulars, we also find another absolutely related dualistic one, Reason-Power. So, on the whole: Homogenising Reason *vs.* Individualistic Power. Rosamond McKitterick's work occupies a place closer to the former axis,

...underlying the processes of communication (was) a strong purpose, not simply to ensure royal control, peace, stability and order, but also to create a harmonious and Christian whole of a disparate realm. The Christian faith offered an essential common culture to bind this huge empire together...¹⁰⁸

, while, the latest innovative approach, that of Jennifer Davis, based more on "patterns of power"¹⁰⁹ is near to the latter one - both books published by Cambridge University.

The Anglophone debate on the connection of the Carolingians to the modern nation state fall exactly in the absolutist Carolingian-related dualism: absolute and inescapable teleology (with its mostly essentialist rationalistic followers) *vs.* absolute contingency (with its usually deconstructionist power-centric adherents).

One factor prompting this new work is the abandonment of an older, often nationalistic, progressive narrative of Carolingian history. This view posited the creation of an empire by Charlemagne and then its slow dissolution into political disarray, to be eventually followed by the building of what would become modern European nation states. This interpretation is unsustainable, both in its teleological expectations about nation states, and in its vision of the trajectory of Carolingian power. Most historians today are uncomfortable with the expectation that the nation state is the natural outcome of historical development and with the vision of the Carolingian empire as subject to slow decline after reaching its pinnacle under Charlemagne¹¹⁰.

Being significantly power-centric in his early writings, Reuter tells us that,

Darwinism and neo-Darwinism evolutionary theory is not only potentially a rich source of analogies, metaphors and insights for historians; it has the

¹⁰⁷ Nelson in Reuter 2010, xiv.

¹⁰⁸ McKitterick 2008, 379.

¹⁰⁹ Davis 2015, 3.

¹¹⁰ Davis 2015, 13.

advantage of having random change and adaptation as its motors, rather than a teleology which can all too easily underpin an unhistorical triumphalism¹¹¹.

It is needless for us to point out the inherent essentialism and power-centricity found in Darwinism as such.

Note here that in the Western case, predestination is understood in parochial and absolute terms – and, as we will see, this is rooted in Augustinian error. For, in reality, predestination and foreknowledge are not the same thing; indeed, it is in the 'in-between' of them that human agency is to thrive. Both Western-type teleology and its (antithetical) sibling, contingency, fail to see that the issue is that the Carolingian worldview and its thought categories provided both the yeast, the constitutive ingredients, as well as the railway system that could potentially lead to the nation states of today, and that their systems indeed possessed those building blocks comprised of key Carolingian thought characteristics. To do really emancipated history means that one is to uncover both those axes in themselves as well as the mediating bridge that connects them – not to eternally propagate mere dichotomies that you yourself have constructed in the false belief that they exhaust the breath of Being.

Thirdly, nowhere else is all of the above effected more than in the realm of religion: "[a] totally different aspect of religion and the church originating in the Carolingian era was the formation of an ideology of Christendom"¹¹².. While,

Underlining the role of the king in patronising culture served to enhance Charlemagne's dignity by linking him with Roman imperial practices, and Carolingian propagandists stressed this feature of his activities¹¹³,

Yet,

... the Carolingian renaissance was something incomparable in the cultural scene of the early medieval West. What made it so exceptional was not so much the practice of patronising scholars and promoting learning, but the fact that these were so closely bound up with the ruler's religious conviction and political ideology. The revival of learning *per se* was never one of Charlemagne's objectives; it was rather an outcome of the ecclesiastical reforms he promulgated in an attempt to create a better Christian society

¹¹¹ Reuter 1998, 37.

¹¹² Bredero 1994, 16.

¹¹³ Hen 2011, 179.

whose salvation is assured, and thereby ensures the salvation of the king. In this respect, the Carolingian renaissance was significantly different...¹¹⁴

While,

The limits of Carolingian renaissance hardly exceeded, even in the ninth century, the dimensions of a religious culture that was largely confined to the clerical and monastic orders – what contemporaries in fact so often meant by the term *ecclesia*. At the same time, in lay society, pre-Carolingian legal and religious ideas and practices – and I suspect, (though this has been beyond the scope of this paper) political ones too – persisted and evolved with a momentum of their own, affected but not determined by ecclesiastical *novitas*¹¹⁵.

The latter holds true up to 1046 AD.

The core problem was of course that, as far as Christianity is concerned, Charlemagne's religious convictions were simply erroneous. One can call them as they like (innovative, corrective, reforming, etc.) yet they were not the dogmatics and practices of Christianity as had been from the time of the Lord Jesus Christ both in 'the Greek East' and in 'the Latin West'. In fact, to even call them erroneous is a modern secular convention of courtesy for in terms of the era, they simply constituted heresy. Yet heresy in the Roman sense of the word (opinion and ego-based innovation against theophany-based experience) and not in its politically-ideologised medieval Frankish, modern meaning with the murderous, torture-inflicting heavy bag it carries in the post-Carolingian West. Yet, it is sometimes difficult to call someone a heretic to his/her face when he holds a sword – in any form - on your neck and on that of your flock's... But, again, maybe this is the ultimate test of faith.

If we are to judge from the terror-ridden, fear-convulsing and anguish-filled scenes of the final hours of key Frankish theologians like Charlemagne's friend, Alcuin of York (c. 735-804 AD) and rulers like William the Conqueror (d. 1028 – 1087 AD), it can be said that it seems that the murderous corrective doctrines and confidence of the Frankish Correctors had failed them in the end, and upon the Litmus test of Christian fidelity: the Christ's key mission of undoing satan's work by defeating sin-induced death and bestowing True being to creation.

About Alcuin, we learn,

¹¹⁴ Hen 2011, 178.

¹¹⁵ Nelson 1986, 66.

The darkness was the deeper to his thought, as long since his physical sight had been failing and at the end was almost gone. His letters were dictated to one or another of his friends. "I am trembling from head to foot at the terror of Judgment, lest that Day find me unready," he told Arno a year or so before his death"¹¹⁶.

Related to the exterminator of Roman Orthodox Christianity in the British Isles and Ireland, William the Bastard ("both literally and figuratively"¹¹⁷) there is indeed a rather well-known part of his confession left to us by Ordericus Vitalis (1075 - 1143? AD), his *Historia Ecclesiastica*, Book VII, Chapter XV:

I appoint no one my heir to the crown of England, but leave it to the disposal of the Eternal Creator, whose I am, and who ordereth all things. For I did not attain that high honour by hereditary right, but I wrested it from the perjured king Harold in a desperate battle, with much effusion of human blood, and it was by the slaughter and banishment of his adherents, that I subjugated England to my rule. I have persecuted its native inhabitants beyond all reason. Whether nobles or commons, I have cruelly oppressed them; many I unjustly disinherited; innumerable multitudes, many in the county of York, perished through me by famine or the sword. [...] These events inflamed me to the highest pitch of resentment, and I fell on the English of the northern counties like a raving lion. I commanded their houses and corn, with all their implements and furniture, to be burnt without distinction, and large herds of cattle and beasts of burden, to be butchered wherever they were found. It was thus that I took revenge on the multitudes of both sexes by subjecting them to the calamity of a cruel famine; and by so doing, alas me! became the barbarous murderer of many thousands, both young and old, of that fine race of people. Having, therefore, made my way to the throne of that kingdom by so many crimes, I dare not to leave it to any one but God alone, lest after my death worse should happen by my means¹¹⁸.

Such was the level of destruction that William subjected the Isles; and he did not even dare to leave an heir to the throne for fear that there might be much worse things to follow on his account!!! – and in that, he foresaw the Plantagenet Dynasty (1154 – 1485 AD) whom Desmond Seward so vividly describes in his book, *The demon's Brood: A History of the Plantagenet Dynasty*. Yet a less known passage right in the opening of his confession reads:

¹¹⁶ Duckett 1951, 303.

¹¹⁷ Rex 2014, 209.

¹¹⁸ Ordericus Vitalis 1853, 413.

“I tremble,” he said, “my friends, when I reflect on the grievous sins which burden my conscience, and now I am summoned before the awful tribunal of God, I know not what I ought to do. I was bred to arms from my childhood, and I am stained with the rivers of blood I have shed. ...”¹¹⁹.

Indeed, notwithstanding the apparent genuine sense of repentance of the participants, there is something disturbingly lacking in these death accounts in that they do not seem to merely portray a natural and expected fear towards death and judgment, but they also tell us that this fear was so totally absolute that this in itself unveils a failing and falling absence of any ontologically significant and real foundation for both understanding the nature of the experience (to the degree that it is possible) and also a way to cope with it (ameliorate that is)¹²⁰. This indeed points to a secularised, worldsised mode of theology. We hope that by the end of our discussion the meaning of the term, ‘secularised’ will become clear. In a welcomed partial ‘deviation’ from the trappings of mainstream Western historiography, Fichtenau gives a splendid summary of the nature of the Carolingian religious worldview and its destructive peculiarity:

The Carolingian humanists moved therefore in a Christian atmosphere. But Christianity was not offered in its fullness but only, as it were, in an abridged edition. Nobody realized, and nobody could realize, how far away they were from *the living fountain of Christian faith*, as distinct from its purely philological sources. This was true even when they stood in terror of the Last Judgment. Alcuin’s wisdom could make people more learned; but *it could not really help them. Ignorant of the internal and the external needs of mankind, these scholars were under the illusion that they were missionaries when they were no more than propagandists*¹²¹.

Indeed, apart from philological-like references, nowhere do we get to know the Christianity that predated the Carolingians and which their Magnus King and theologians set themselves up to correct, renovate and improve. The question of the dogmatic outlook of the Christianity that was the subject of Charlemagne’s *Innovatio* and *Correctio* is never broached – let alone answered. The closest we get - not so much theologically but in the field of rituals - is Janet Nelson’s, *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (containing important references to the Eastern Roman Empire as well). In this framework, we indeed find a key feature of a dualist pair

¹¹⁹ Ordericus Vitalis 1853, 403.

¹²⁰ For the issue of Near Death Experience, see Retoulas 2022.

¹²¹ Fichtenau 1963, 103, emphasis ours.

underlying Western historiography, i.e., 'faith' vs. 'practice' in the line of that of 'ideas' vs 'practice'.

Yet, the womb out of which emerged the so-called 'reform movement' in 10th-century Frankish monasticism had been the Carolingian *Innovatio* policies that came a hundred years earlier. Compared with Roman Christianity, the key characteristic of those policies was 'conformity to the present age' (metaphysical philosophical entities and concepts in themselves are part of this age too (idols-like)), worldisation and confusing Christianity with the Created (with both the metaphysical and the physical). But as Saint Gregory of Nyssa says in *the Life of Moses*:

In the beginning [when Moses entered the Divine Darkness], the divine word forbids that the Divine be likened to any of the things that can be known by men, since every concept/thought/perception which comes from some comprehensible/graspable image/phantasy by an approximate understanding and by guessing at the divine nature constitutes an idol of God and does not herald God.¹²²

So much for the Saint that the West propagates as 'Platonist/neo-Platonist'!!!

From its inception in the 8th century, the Frankish West seems to be stuck religiously to some form of distorted Hellenity and politically to some form of distorted Judaism – all conformed to the mere mundane realities of the Germanic condition of the time. It has not been able to truly experience, understand and enact in what ways philosophic Hellenity and legalistic Judaism are both antithetical and concordant with Christ.

Yet there was an overarching doctrinal aim of the Carolingian endeavours: the extermination of the Ecumenicity of Romanity (including its constitutive elements, Hellenity and Judaism) – something apparently or innately rampant in today's Western religious or secular literature too:

At least initially, however, motivated most likely by both theological predilections and a desire to undermine Byzantine claims of ecumenicity regarding the second Nicene council of 787...¹²³.

So, from its inception, the Frankish aim was the undermining and the destruction of Roman Ecumenicity.

Thus, it is hardly surprising that, apart from sporadic references to a very limited number of Roman Latin Fathers such as Saint Augustine, Saint Jerome, etc., who are wholesale put under the term, 'Catholic Christianity',

¹²² Saint Gregory of Nyssa PG 44:377B.

¹²³ Chazelle 2001, 38.

at no point in the relevant historical accounts are we really introduced to what Carolingian ‘Christianity’ really was, what it ontologically and theologically meant and promised, what it effected in ‘the body politic’, in society and in the various persons. While we get very detailed exotericism-based accounts on the legal developments, on the institutional arrangements in reference to Charlemagne’s moral standards and religious precepts, we do not get a sense of its inner spirit. We have descriptions of a system of veins but little awareness of the blood that runs through them – let alone the nature of the blood.

At the core of it, there lies an innate reason for this absence. As Hamilton writes in her book, *Church and People in the Medieval West, 900-1200*:

...thirteenth-century churchmen, like their ninth-century counterparts, were not particularly ambitious. They were content to try to ensure that Christian practice was followed, and the authority of Church doctrine accepted. They were not especially concerned to investigate the extent to which people believed, or did not believe, the tenets of the Christian faith as long as they acknowledged them. Some modern historians have sought to explore the extent of belief, and unbelief, in the medieval world. This text has no such objective. Instead, following the lead given by the sources, its focus is on Christian practice rather than spirituality¹²⁴.

Such a very notable and most welcome exception to the latter situation is Celia Chazelle’s *The Crucified God in the Carolingian Era: Theology and Art of Christ’s Passion*, which vividly portrays the enormous difficulties (concepts, dualistic oscillations, linguistic deficits (e.g. with the Greek texts), etc.) the theologian scholars of the Carolingian Court had in dealing with key Christological issues, among those being Saint Bernard of Aniane himself¹²⁵ – not to say anything about his much less well equipped friends and colleagues such as Alcuin of York. A key difficulty encountered was how “to affirm the presence of two antithetical natures in a single person”¹²⁶. And indeed, these difficulties would prove to be largely incurable, constituting Arian and Nestorianising core influences during the formative period of Frankish Christianity. They would further echo down the centuries into Western modernity in a framework that nominally accepts the Theanthropicity of Lord Jesus Christ (fully Theos/God and fully anthropos/human being) while at the same time distorting Him beyond recognition – ultimately, turning Him into a ‘great sage’. Consider that Neo-Arianism, i.e., accepting Jesus as merely a man, is pandemically dominant in the West, especially

¹²⁴ Hamilton 2013, 5.

¹²⁵ Chazelle 2001, Chapter 2.

¹²⁶ Chazelle 2001, 66.

today, in a manner which transcends even the Western religion-secular divide.

This de-Divined Christ Jesus is certainly not unrelated to another key precept of the Carolingian *Correctio*: "In the Carolingian Renaissance there was an attempt under Germanic influence to conform religious life to Old Testament norms and prescriptions..."¹²⁷. Drawing upon Saint Augustine,

...Frankish royal ideology, enmeshed with ideals of Davidic kingship, conceived of the Frankish realm as being based upon the Old Testament model. The empire under the Carolingians was conceptualized as a Christian empire, whose rulers were new kings of Israel. As such, Jerusalem was their primary imperial ideal¹²⁸.

The Germanic conditions were much less commensurable with the liberation for humanity provided by the Theanthropic Christ:

The high Middle Ages was especially attracted to the Old Testament, more attuned than the New to the state of the society and the mentality of the time[, i.e., the Franks]... In the superficially christianized West, which a centralizing government was attempting to unify with the support of [its own established] clergy, the Jerusalem of kings and high priests was bound to exercise a special attention¹²⁹.

As such, Roman spirituality was aggressively replaced by a new type of religion that was donned in a Christian cloak:

Historians have often remembered only the more spectacular aspects of this similarity between high medieval Christendom and the Israel of old: Charlemagne's being called 'David' or 'new Josiah', or the anointed which, conferred by the hands of bishops on the kings of the West ... made them the successors of Saul and Solomon. But the Old Testament's influence left a far deeper mark on religious mentalities and on spiritual life. It was during the carolingian period that Christianity became a matter of outward practices and obedience to rules¹³⁰.

And this was not the Old Testament of the Law and the *theosis*-oriented God-Seers and Prophets: "I said, 'You *are* gods, And all of you *are* children of the Most High'"¹³¹; but instead, some distorted version of Pharisaic and

¹²⁷ Bredero 1994, 358.

¹²⁸ Gabriele 2013, 77.

¹²⁹ Vauchez 1993, 12.

¹³⁰ Vauchez 1993, 13.

¹³¹ Ψαλμοί/Psalms 82:6.

later Talmudic Judaism. As the Franks were replacing Roman Christianity with Frankishised Augustinianism, Babylonianism was taking over Western Roman Judaism; it had little to do with Roman Judaism, that, is, Judaism before the Rabbinist Ashkenazation of the 11th century AD; the Roman Hellenic Jewry (the Jews of the New Testament) whom Nicholas Robert Michael de Lange brought to the forefront from the abyss of Western epistemology¹³². One must also have little doubt that the propagation of the Old Testament Masoretic Text, the oldest copies of which only date back to the 10th century A.D. (including, among other things, changes to prophecy and doctrine from the original Hebrew, exclusion of several Old Testament books, and alterations to pre-Christian Old Testament texts that included references to the coming of the Christ), is intricately related to the emergence of the Carolingian religious mentality as the railways of preexisting wagons.

In the later centuries and still today, this being-in-bed between Frankish theology and Frankishised-Babylonian Judaism had serious consequences that lie at the core of Pope Benedict's *Lecture* for it distortingly introduced Frankish Pharisaic-Talmudic Jewish eisegesis in place of Christian exegesis in the Christian understanding of the New Testament:

This [newly arrived modern] division of Biblical Theology from the Augustinian, Scholastic and Dogmatic Theology was the result not only of the realisation of the non-biblical character of the Frankish-Latin (Scholastic [(Thomist)] and Protestant theological Tradition, but also of the acceptance on the part of the Westerners of the Judaic interpretation [*eisegesis*] of the Old Testament as the interpretive key for the New Testament. Thus, the New Testament was incorporated in the Old Testament not as the latter was exegeted by Christ, the Apostles and the Fathers but in its Jewish interpretation. All that existed in the New Testament which was not in agreement with that Jewish interpretation was rendered as [idiosyncratic] innovations of the Apostles, which had its main cause in the need of adaptation of the supposedly not realised anticipations of the first generation of Christians, which were supposedly also mixed with Hellenistic elements¹³³.

¹³² On the history of Roman Jewry, Nicholas Robert Michael de Lange's works are bravely instrumental in "the recovery of a largely overlooked aspect/period of Jewish history, namely the Jewish encounter with Greek culture from the earliest points of contact in antiquity to the end of the Byzantine Empire. Nicholas de Lange's distinguished career has brought recognition to this undeservedly neglected field, in part by *dispelling the common belief/claim that Jewish-Greek culture largely disappeared after about 100 CE and the rise of Christianity*". (Robert A. Kraft, <https://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2020/2020.08.13/>, accessed June 8, 2023).

¹³³ Father John Romanides 1991, 91.

This was preceding by the fact that,

...from the last century [(19th century)], Western theologians, the majority being Protestants, began to realise that the theology of the Holy Scripture was not fully identical with either the only theology that they knew, that is, Augustinian Patristic theology or their own Dogmatic theology. Already from the time of the Reformation, the Protestants had claimed that the [Thomist] Scholastic theology was not Biblical, while the Papists answered that it was Protestant theology that was not Biblical. Yet both parties agreed that Augustinian theology is Biblical; for in their view, it was (supposedly) identical with the theology of Apostle Paul. Their main difference was that they did not agree with each other on the way of interpretation of [the theology of] Augustine and of Apostle Paul¹³⁴.

We will come to see that this last claim of Saint Augustine regarding Apostle Paul – in reality, contra the *Ecclesia* Fathers - is truly laughable.

To understand the anti-Roman character of the Carolingian endeavours, one has merely to look at the treatise,

...known as *Opus Karoli regis* or *Libri carolini*, composed by Theodulf of Orleans between 790 and 793. Some of the brief comments approving the argument of the treatise entered in the margins of the manuscript copy sent to the pope have been attributed to Charlemagne¹³⁵.

The otherwise scholastically nuanced work of Rosamond McKitterick follows the Carolingian spirit practically to its corresponding letter – even in matters that otherwise pertain to deep theological understanding. Like the heroes of her study, McKitterick uncritically uses the term, 'Greek' to refer to the Eastern Roman Empire. She tells us:

The *Opus Karoli regis* was in part a defence against what was perceived as a Greek attack on Frankish and Roman thinking. It explained the errors of the Greeks' understanding of the place of images of Christ and his saints in the church¹³⁶.

Indeed, such was the threat by the 'Greek' attack upon 'Roman thinking' and upon its self-declared protector, the Carolingian Franks that, instead of endorsement, Charles I received a lengthy letter of refutation of his doctrinal adventures by the Roman Pope Adrian/Hadrianus I (o. 772 – 795 AD) who aggressively endorsed the views of those whom the Carolingians had been

¹³⁴ Father John Romanides 1991, 90.

¹³⁵ McKitterick 2008, 313.

¹³⁶ McKitterick 2008, 313.

characterising as ‘Greeks’, i.e., the views of his coreligionists of the Ecumenical Roman Christianity. To tell the whole truth,

Hadrian had already excommunicated all those who had not accepted the Seventh Ecumenical Synod. Technically the Franks were in a state of excommunication. But to implement this would have brought down upon Papal Romania and her citizens the wrath of Frankish feudalism, as had been the fate of the Romans in the rest of Francia (Gallia, Germania, and Italia)¹³⁷.

Indeed, the 788 A.D. attempt by the Roman Eastern army to dislodge the Franks from Italy ended in failure, something that secured their presence there:

There was a complication. Even as Byzantine forces and the Lombard king were disembarking to drive the Franks from Italy, Hadrian’s ambassadors were *en route* or just back home from Constantinople with their copy of the acts of the second Nicene council. The Greek text of the proceedings proclaimed the perfect unity of the Byzantine rulers and the pope on veneration, punctuated by the usual acclamations of imperial power, the whole, of course, signed and approved by papal legates¹³⁸.

Similarly, when by convening the Council of Aachen in 809 AD the Franks attempted to put pressure on the Roman Pope Leo (o. 795 – 816), the latter,

...rejected the *Filioque* not only as an addition to the Creed, but also as dogma, claiming that the Fathers left it out of the Creed neither out of ignorance, nor out of negligence, nor out of oversight, but on purpose and by divine inspiration¹³⁹.

So, Charles I’s *Correctio* stood corrected – at least for the time being. And this was not a matter of a temporary lack of knowledge on the part of the Frankish theologians but a deliberate policy of insistence on imposing their control and will upon Roman theology outright. This can be seen from the fact that “the [Frankish] Paris Synod of 825 ... no wiser than its predecessor sought in vain to obtain from Pope Eugene[/Eugenius] II an abandonment of the position taken by Adrian I”¹⁴⁰ – in favour of the wishes

¹³⁷ Father John Romanides 1981.

¹³⁸ McCormick 2008, 367.

¹³⁹ Father John Romanides 1981.

¹⁴⁰ Catholic Encyclopedia. “Caroline Books (*Libri Carolini*)”. Accessed July 17th 2016. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03371b.htm>.

of both Louis the Pious (r. 813 – 840 AD) as well as the Roman Emperor, Michael II the Stammerer (r. 820 – 829 AD).

The Carolingian Franks emerged on the scene of world religious history distinctively, but above all, in a deadly fashion. Indeed, by 661 AD,

[t]he Franks had rid the Church in Francia of all Roman bishops ... and had made themselves its bishops and clerical administrators. They had divided up the Church's property into fiefs which had been doled out as benefices according to rank within the pyramid of military vassalage. These Frankish bishops had no Archbishop and had not met in Synod for eighty years. They had been meeting as army officers with their fellow warlords¹⁴¹.

Fichtenau rather cryptically tells us about the still Roman lower clergy under Charlemagne:

The majority of priests were not deeply touched by it. Hence it is incorrect to speak, in the age of Charles the Great, of 'the Frankish church' as though it were a single unit. The lower clergy, who belonged socially to the servants, to the broad mass of the middle and the lower classes, were quite distinct from the higher clergy, who thought of themselves, with their aristocratic style of life, as part of the *élite*. The life of the lower clergy was not only parallel to, but actually was a part of the life lived by the lay poor¹⁴².

It was exactly with this overlord dichotomic mentality in Church affairs that the modern Franks would operate within the newly-established Kingdom of Greece after 1832.

Carolingian *Innovatio* and *Correctio* pertained to religio-isation, religio-philosophical dualism entrapping reality and existence in mundane Manichaeic-like *seemingly* antithetical pairs: otherworldliness/metaphysicalisation *vs.* the worldly, intellect-centricity/ideologisation *vs.* arbitrary power-centricity (involving the extermination of the noetic heart (*νοῦς*, the *nous*) as the nucleus of human existence), homogenisation/essentialism and the social/public *vs.* differentiation and the reticent individual, intellect *vs.* the will (including emotiveness), intelligible (soul) *vs.* body (praxis), exotericism *vs.* individualistically reclusive introversion, literalism *vs.* the allegorical, contemplation *vs.* mere act-based ritualism, moral absolutism (moralism) *vs.* very liberal behaviour as far as the nobility was concerned (including magic and the occult), a belief in an utterly passive and intrinsically unchangeable human nature totally immersed in sin and subject to the soteriological whims of an above-all Omnipotent and Rageful God-

¹⁴¹ Father John Romanides 1975, Part 3.

¹⁴² Fichtenau 1963, 156.

Judge (obviously they confused God with Charlemagne), moralism, deep perversion of the Christian Mysteries (including the dogma of the Holy Eucharist and Baptism), “distortion of the meaning of relics and thus of holiness in general along with doctrines of the goodness of matter in general”¹⁴³, submission of the Church to the Frankish Monarch, dichotomisation between the Nobility-Church, and the laity (the majority of whom were enslaved conquered Romans) as well as between the higher (of Frankish noble birth) and the lower (largely of Roman descent) clergy, bifurcation between Greek and Latin (as well as within Latin, and between Latin and local languages), and a general contractual legalised conception of religion. And this deforming transformation took place through both intrinsic errors found in Augustinian theology as well as distortions of some of its correct parts by the Carolingians and their Western successors. It is a wonderment that Western academia does not really question the Carolingian adoption of the rather obscure Saint Augustine as their ‘national theologian’ of all the Fathers of the Roman Church whom they practically submitted to his authority. All in all, and at its best, Carolingian religion was but a necrotic aping version of the Roman Greco-Latin Orthodox Catholic Christianity: the monkey skull of effrontery.

Between the eight and tenth centuries, a certain concept of the christian faith, characterized by the dimension of mystery and anticipation of the last times, finally disappeared. It gave away to a set of representations and practices whose inspiration was notably different. ... The discovery of the historical Christ, the valorization of moral life, the importance afforded rituals and gestures constitute the foundations of a spirituality which was to unfold fully in the course of the following centuries¹⁴⁴.

Interestingly and not accidentally but dualistically expectable, the ostracising of the Lord Jesus Christ from Christianity in Western modernity takes place with a systematic attack on His historical reality and presence – in reality, an exterminating attack on the equally false understanding of His corporeal existence as found in the medieval West - turning him into a bodiless spirit: *the ouroboros serpent at the heart of historically engendered Western religiosity(ies) through the course of, as well as within, the ages*. So, as I have said elsewhere:

[This] is a false predicament; an antithesis by resemblance, a resemblance in antithesis; for all this is how to become in the likeness of the Gnostic ouroboros, whether you may be religious or secular: The Manichean head

¹⁴³ Kelley 2013.

¹⁴⁴ Vauchez 1993, 33.

swallows the Augustinian tail in an eternal cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, transmigrating into each other by ecdysis, casting off our former selves. And, as in the Western case, even the 'religious vs. secular' dynamic in itself is a Gnostic derivative born of Augustinian theology and thought categories that arose in the evolution towards modernity. The core problem for Christianity is not Augustinian theology as such but rather when it becomes the overall determinant of Christian dogmatics. Indeed, no one can escape Gnosticism as long as they remain under the influence of Augustinianism – Catholic, Protestant, etc. And the same holds for Rabbinism (Masoretic-Talmudic), Kabbalah, etc. – as it also does for Islamism as a phenomenon of Western modernity - including *vahdet-i şuhûd* (unity of appearance) Islam. Whatever passes through the intellectual-spiritual-emotive sieve of Frankish Augustinism becomes – at 'best' – a Gnostic affiliate. The reverse holds too¹⁴⁵.

Indeed, modern New Age religion constitutes a case in point. For, despite outward appearances, as Hanegraaff writes,

New Age religion is not, as popularly assumed, a product of the "oriental renaissance". Oriental ideas and concepts have, almost without exception, been adopted only insofar as they could be assimilated into already-existing western frameworks. Oriental religious ideas have been adapted to a modern occidental context, and in that process their meanings underwent subtle (and sometimes not-so-subtle) changes. Both in esotericism generally and in the New Age movement particularly, the Orient has functioned mainly as a symbol of "true spirituality" and as a repository of exotic terminology; its ideas have not fundamentally changed those of western recipients. The basic structures of New Age religion have emerged, practically without exception, from long-standing occidental traditions which either belong to, or are closely connected with western esotericism (*sensu* Faivre). The foundations of New Age religion were created during the late 18th and the 19th century, in the course of a process which I have referred to as the secularization of esotericism¹⁴⁶.

To return to the West's Middle Ages: its overall framework was the general dualism pervasive in the Germanic world (and as such susceptible to Gnostic influences):

... this dualistic view meant that the world was controlled by supernatural powers, some striving for good, some for evil. Good powers are directed towards what is spiritual, evil powers toward what is material and physical. In opposition to this view-point... the church does not teach that evil is an

¹⁴⁵ Retoulas 2022, 19.

¹⁴⁶ Hanegraaff 1996, 514.

independent power but a negation of good (so Augustine). But in practice, dualism had a strong effect on [Western] Christian teaching, particularly during the Middle Ages¹⁴⁷.

Note here that Saint Augustine's inception of the 'Original Sin' surpassed even the fallen spirits and the Manichaeans in antihuman essentialism, showing human nature after the Fall to be utterly evil and hereditarily evil at that— a thing unheard of in Christianity¹⁴⁸. And if you make satan a 'collaborator' in God's works as Augustine's dogma does, you can do everything that he does with immunity; and with the concoction of Purgatory (no eternal damnation in Hell), you are set to bring humanity and the Cosmos to extinction with the seal of divine immunity and approval. For an example, see the Apocalyptic Western Crusades (religious and secular). One can, of course, call the newly-created Frankish intellected 'Christianity' 'innovative', but it cannot be deemed, 'Roman'.

During the early part of final phase of the Roman-Frankish, low-intensity struggle in the West (c. 950 – 1012 AD), the Roman Popes successfully countered multiple attempts by the Franks to take over the Roman Papacy. At the forefront of this were: the Roman Popes (especially, the 'anathema' of medieval Frankish Church historians and their modern Western successors, Pope John XII (o. 955 – 964 AD), and 'the humiliation of the Franks', Pope John XV (o. 985-996 AD)); the Roman nobility who had stayed loyal to Romanity (such as the 'scorn' of Western historiography, the Crescentii family); and that other absentee from Western historiographical focus in the period, the enslaved *populus Romanorum* – externally they were at certain points supported by their fellow Romans in Constantinople.

There can be no doubt that the Orthodox Christians of England knew very well that their Roman Papacy had been struggling against a Frankish takeover in 983-984, in 996-999, in 999-1003 and finally in 1009-1046 when turncoat Tusculanum Romans were forced upon the Papacy by the German Emperors until it became finally Franco-Latin by 1046. It is within this context that the Norman invasion of England took place with the blessings of the Lombard Pope Alexander II (1061-1073)¹⁴⁹.

The Franks were using a variety of measures against the Roman Papacy. On the political side, for example, we find the consolidation of the Frankish-supported Tusculan family (a kind of a precursor of the later Francophile

¹⁴⁷ Bredero 1994, 359.

¹⁴⁸ For an exposé of the Augustinian cacodoxies on this matter, see Father John Romanides 2008a. and, also, Retoulas 2022.

¹⁴⁹ Father John Romanides 1977.

'Byzantine' Paleologian dynasty), which took over the Papacy from 1012 to 1046/8 AD. Moreover, the Franks had also been using overt and covert action such as orchestrated propaganda campaigns centred upon actual and fictional 'corruption' of the Roman Popes and their clergy, and, upon accusations of 'illiteracy'!!! Of course, "the purpose of this smear campaign was to shatter the people's confidence in the Roman Papacy and justify the need to cleanse it with 'virtuous' and 'literate' Lombards, and East and West Franks"¹⁵⁰.

Considering their own introverted, 'concealed' self, the moralism of the Franks towards the late Roman Popes who remained faithful to Romanity was, to say the least, suspect:

The concern of the Frankish bishops for the morality of Roman Popes is quite interesting, as they did not seem concerned with their own morality when passing the death sentence in their episcopal courts. Charlemagne's many wives and fifteen illegitimate children were taken in stride, together with the fact that he forbade the marriage of his daughters. But Charlemagne did not mind their having children, although he castigated such practices in his capitularies¹⁵¹.

That is the reason why certain Roman Church sources refer to the Franks in benevolent terms, while Saint Boniface (d. 754) in his letter (742 AD) to the Roman Orthodox Pope Zacharias depicts - in terms of dogmatics - the religious ways of the Frankish clergy as not even remotely spiritual, but indeed as "worldly/secular (*saeculariter*)"¹⁵². This is a very important point, especially from a Roman Christian saint of the common Eastern-Western Christianity of ecumenical Romanity: the Frankish 'Christian' ways constitute a 'worldisation, a secularisation' of the Lord Jesus Christ's teachings and ways. The Frankish de-Romanising transformation of Christianity turned itself from a therapeutic reality for the human condition into a 'religion', i.e., a Frankish worldly-ised/secularised religious creed-system and institutional mechanism. The Letter reserved very harsh characterisations for the Carolingian clergy: an "adulterated clergy", "tax collectors", "drunkards", "naughty", "whoremongers", "adulterers", "fornicators", "hunters", and a clergy "that pours out the blood of men with their own hands, whether pagans or Christians" (the latter being, of course, Western Roman Orthodox Latin Christians) – and all this 300 years before the Crusades¹⁵³. In fact, one

¹⁵⁰ Father John Romanides 1981.

¹⁵¹ Father John Romanides 1981.

¹⁵² Saint Boniface PL 742:745BCD.

¹⁵³ Saint Boniface PL 742:745BCD.

cannot help but notice how the secularisation and sexual promiscuity of the modern Frankish world somehow seems related to a kind of ongoing worldisation into modern ideologies such as genderism, pansexualism, etc. that nevertheless retains these characteristics found in early Frankism.

At the dawn of the second millennium, the Papacy had terminally fallen to the Franks; not without a prolonged fight from the Western Romans and only from 1046 AD onwards.

The implications are quite tantalizing when applied to the task of understanding the framework of Frankish or Latin Christianity and theology in relation to Roman Christianity and theology. Feudalism, the Inquisition, and Scholastic theology were clearly the work of the Franks, Germans, Lombards, Normans, and Goths, who took over the Church and her property, and used the religion of the Romans to keep the conquered Romans in a servile state. In contrast to this, the Romans who were conquered by Arab and Turkish Muslims had their own Roman bishops. Thus in the one case, the institutional aspects of Christianity became a tool of suppression, and in the other, the means of national survival¹⁵⁴.

Indeed, the last Pope of Romanity, Pope Sylvester III managed to hold His office from January 20th to March 10th, 1045. What a contrast!!!:

In ecclesiastical as in lay institutions in the East feudalistic developments remained sporadic and unsystematic; they were never integrated. The involved mechanism of Western feudalism with its hierarchies of vassals, its divided jurisdictions, and its fragmentation of power had no more chance of engulfing the Byzantine Church than it had of superseding the bureaucracy of the Byzantine state¹⁵⁵.

The Frankish conquest of the emerald jewel island of Roman Orthodox Catholic Christianity, Hibernia followed along these lines. Take for example, Gerald of Wales (c. 1146 – c. 1223)’s campaigns against the Roman Catholic Orthodox Irish in his *Topographia Hiberniae*, written around 1188, i.e., soon after the Frankish Norman invasion of Ireland. As Robert Bartlett says, “it reveals the emergence of new attitudes towards conquered peoples”. In essence, the Irish are portrayed as savage, “their religious education nowhere near civilized standards” who “of Christ they knew nothing”!!! – how Carolingian!!!:

¹⁵⁴ Father John Romanides 1981.

¹⁵⁵ Kantorowicz 1956, 166.

The story must be an invention. The Irish were converted to Christianity long before the English. What Gerald is doing is creating a powerful image of nakedness, rawness and religious ignorance. He is justifying the Norman conquest of Ireland by portraying the native Irish as backward and barbaric¹⁵⁶.

In fact, this 'treatise' bears the marks of an outward Frankish Imperialism in incubation, and it still resonates to this day. It is the birth of Imperialism as we know it.

Geoffrey of Monmouth [(c. 1095-c. 1155)'s]... *History of the Kings of Britain* is one of the supreme achievements of the historical imagination, presenting almost 2,000 years of British history in one majestic sweep. ... It was also almost entirely a work of fiction - the first great work of the Oxford school of history... Tenth-century English kings may have been imperial rulers in that they ruled, or claimed to rule, over a number of kingdoms; but they were not imperialists¹⁵⁷.

As the great Irish historian, Donnchadh Ó Corráin's writes in his sincere, *Irish Church, its Reform and the English Invasion*:

The English invasion brought the evil of racism to Ireland ... The impact on the Irish Church was disastrous¹⁵⁸.

Here, the term English is used as an umbrella term for Norman, Anglo-Norman, Cambro-Norman, Fleming, Welsh, Saxon, Breton, English & c. It essentially denotes a Frankish Augustinian 'Catholic'. These after the horrendous Norman invasion of Britain (Hastings, 1066 AD) that led to the uprooting of the native English royalty and the Christian Church, and to the enslavement of the British population Isles: English, Welsh, Scots. And, as Peter Rex's *The English Resistance: The Underground War against the Normans* shows - something mainstream Western academia has skilfully ignored, i.e., "that the war against the Normans did not end at Hastings" (1066 AD)¹⁵⁹ - there was a war of resistance by Roman Anglo-Saxon Orthodox Christians who were "praying in their Churches for the *Imperium Romanum* whose Roman Emperor and capital were in Constantinople-New

¹⁵⁶ Bartlett 2010.

¹⁵⁷ Gillingham 2000, 9.

¹⁵⁸ Ó Corráin 2017, 122.

¹⁵⁹ Rex 2014, 232.

Rome which was also the headquarters of the Varangian Army in which their boys were serving¹⁶⁰:

The most famous of the Saxon revolutionary leaders against the Normans was Robin Hood... So many Saxons made their way to Constantinople New Rome after the Norman conquest to join the Roman Emperor's Varangian army that they displaced the Scandinavians as the majority. One of the great generals of this Varangian army had been King Harald III Hadrada of Norway (1015-1066). This means that Norway was still Orthodox. He had become the head of the Varangian army under Emperor Zoe... His invasion of England in 1066 at Eburacum was evidently an attempt to defeat the Pro-Franco-Norman party which was trying to get the upper hand among the Saxons. ... There can be no doubt that the Orthodox Christians of England knew very well that their Roman Papacy had been struggling against a Frankish takeover in 983-984, in 996-999, in 999-1003 and finally in 1009-1046 when turncoat Tusculanum Romans were forced upon the Papacy by the German Emperors until it became finally Franco-Latin by 1046. It is within this context that the Norman invasion of England took place with the blessings of the Lombard Pope Alexander II (1061-1073)¹⁶¹.

"The Last Viking"¹⁶², the Norwegian King Harald Hardrada (r. 1046-1066 AD) in the service of the Roman Empress Zoë Porphyrogenita (ten. 1028-1042 AD and 1042-1050 AD):

Surely Norwegian Harald was never aware that he was fighting for a so-called "Greek" or "Byzantine" emperor¹⁶³.

In fact, it still lies in the collective subconscious of the English people as Maurice Hewlett's poem of 1916, *The Song of the Plow: Being the English Chronicle*, vividly portrays:

THE ARGUMENT

A certain man, being in bondage to a proud Conqueror, maintained his customs, nourisht his virtues, obeyed his tyrants, and at the end of a thousand years found himself worse off than he was in the beginning of his servitude. He then lifted his head, lookt his master in the face, and his chains fell off him¹⁶⁴.

¹⁶⁰ Father John Romanides 1977.

¹⁶¹ Father John Romanides 1977.

¹⁶² See, for example, the popular *The Last Viking: The True Story of King Harald Hardrada* (1921) by Don Hollway.

¹⁶³ Father John Romanides 1977.

¹⁶⁴ Hewlett, Maurice (1916), *The Song of the Plow: Being the English Chronicle*, William Heinemann, London.

There is a popular Greek saying – slang for that matter -: “the harlot likes to conceal her joy, but her joy’s magnitude prevents her”. For it is by their own declarations that the Frankish invaders admitted that they had invented a new religion under the name ‘Christian Catholic’: the already fully Frankishised (from 1046 AD onwards) Papacy’s supportive words for Henry II (r. 1154-1189 AD) regarding the Norman invasion the Norman invasion is direct proof:

...insofar as you plan, as a Catholic ruler, to extend the boundaries of the Church, to declare the truth of the Christian faith to untaught and barbarous peoples, to root out the weeds of vice from the field of the Lord... You have expressed your desire to us, dearest son in Christ, that you want to enter the island of Ireland to subject its people to the laws and to root out from it the weeds of vice... *in order to extend the boundaries of the Church, ..., to increase the Christian religion*, you may enter that island¹⁶⁵.

Yet the saint-bearing island of Hibernia and its people had been at the forefront of Orthodox Christianity for centuries as had been glorious England. “And this is Christianity, not only as the correct opinion, but *supra* all, as the *Doxa* (divine Glory) that raises up (*Ortho-*) the Orthodoxy of the Roman multi-ethnic People, the Roman Christianity of the Greek-speaking and Latin-speaking Roman nation, East and West”¹⁶⁶.

Contacting contaminating, exterminating, dehumanising and nihilistic campaigns (usually based on accusations of corruption, irreligiousness, deficits in civilisation, political backwardness, etc.) with the aim of total annihilation against internal and external ‘enemies’ supposedly in need of *Correctio* (to be provided, of course, by Frankish Imperialism) in a framework of self-blindness and denial, have been atavistic Western Frankish characteristics in various guises since the time of Charlemagne. In his perspicacious essay on *Saint John Chrysostom and the Jews*, Dounetas writes,

In the Western civilisation, hatred and disagreement in general are connected to attacking and bodily violence. Disagreeing with something is taken to be the same as to seek its destruction. For this reason, disagreement and especially hatred are avoided in every serious social and scientific conversation. The Western mind is unable to accept conflict dialectically. Thus, a Westerner who ‘loves’ is more of a danger than a Roman who

¹⁶⁵ The Anglo-Norman Pope Andrian IV’s *Laudabiliter satis* (1155/6) (in Ó Corráin 2017, 100, emphasis added).

¹⁶⁶ Retoulas 2022, 87.

'hates', for the former feels obliged to crash the one who happens to oppose his/her sensibilities. A Westerners' 'love' despises disagreement¹⁶⁷.

A mere glance at the atavistically bloody, monolithically enraged and - from time to time - genocidal manner in which the West imposes its version of 'democracy' and 'human rights' on other nations and peoples is a case in point.

Contrary to that, the Roman functions with a clear conscience/consciousness recognising that reality is inherently full of contradictions that can be understood correctly only in a dialectical manner. It is in the dialectical antithesis that Christian love is cultivated¹⁶⁸.

In his insightful, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Authority and Deviance in Western Europe 950 – 1250*, where Ian Robert Moore describes the various ways that Frankism efficaciously violated the person and exterminated the dissident: “*The Formation of a Persecuting Society* [(1987)] was still in proof when Angeliki Laiou, at Harvard, stimulated what has been the most fruitful and widest ranging of my reconsiderations, the comparison between Latin Europe and other complex civilizations, by pointing out that I was mistaken in asserting that religious persecution was 'familiar in Byzantium throughout its history.'”¹⁶⁹. “The persecution of both heretical Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire was both intermittent and directly dependent on the political circumstances of the moment. In the Byzantine Empire, by and large, the long tale of conflict between imperial or ecclesiastical authority and the innumerable heresies generated by exuberant theological disputation seldom descended into sustained persecution. Even the reaction of the Emperor Alexius Comnenus to the discovery of Bogomils in Constantinople, c. 1110, generally treated as one of the more severe episodes of persecution in Byzantine history, was mild by western standards: only the leader was put to death”¹⁷⁰. *It is clear that the problem lies in the Manichaeic-like beast at the core of Augustinian theology released, as exclusively dominant, to the world by the Carolingian Franks.*

In reality,

¹⁶⁷ Dounetas 2010, 124.

¹⁶⁸ Dounetas 2010, 124.

¹⁶⁹ Moore 2007, ix.

¹⁷⁰ Moore 2007, 148-149.

The schism between Eastern and Western Christianity was not between East and West Romans. In actuality, it was a split between East Romans and the conquerors of the West Romans¹⁷¹.

To put it truly mildly, the emergence of Carolingian Franks onto the Roman world stage took place in the manner described by Henri Focillon: '*prehistory bursting into history*'¹⁷².

And after having uprooted the vineyard and infecting the olive-tree orchard of Ecumenical Roman Christianity with both worldisation and other-worldisation, the Magnus King and 'Father' of Western Europe, in a rather farcical-tragic manner in 811AD, addressed the following question to an assembly of lay nobles and clerics in the context of baptism: "Are we [the Franks] truly Christian?... " !!!

9. Quod nobis despiciendum est, utrum vere christiani sumus. Quod in consideration vitae vel morum nostrorum facillime cognosci potest, si diligenter conversationem coram discutere voluerimus¹⁷³.

So, our usage of the term Christian that, as we have previously seen, follows the logic of Saint Gregory of Nyssa is warranted even from the point of view of Charlemagne himself. Neither his lay nobles nor his clerics had any idea as to a proper answer as the question was skilfully evaded¹⁷⁴. The other extraordinary thing here is that, as Davis notes: "even in the context of the long-standing concern with baptism at the Carolingian court, this is a remarkable issue to address in a legislative format"¹⁷⁵... Here we see that Charlemagne and his Franks basically back up Romanides' claim that:

What we do have is a united West and East Roman nation in opposition to an upstart group of Germanic races who began teaching the Romans before they really learned anything themselves. Of course, German teachers could be very convincing on question of dogma, only by holding a knife to the throat. Otherwise, especially in the time of imposing the *Filioque*, the theologians of the new Germanic theology were better than their noble peers, only because they could read and write and had, perhaps, memorized Augustine¹⁷⁶.

¹⁷¹ Father John Romanides 1981.

¹⁷² Vauchez 1993, 13.

¹⁷³ *Capitula Tractanda Cum Comitibus Episcopis et Abbatibus*, no 71, Boretius 1883, 161.

¹⁷⁴ *Capitula de Causis Cum Episcopis et Abbatibus Tractandis*, no 72, Boretius 1883, 162-164.

¹⁷⁵ Davis 2015, 8-9.

¹⁷⁶ Father John Romanides 1975, emphasis ours.

How far we are from the Roman Ecumenical Councils that were centred on human *theosis* and *photismos*!!!

As for these, McKitterick informs us,

That Charlemagne became such a champion of orthodoxy, and that the Frankish theologians were prompted to write so much about very basic matters of faith, no doubt has as much to do with Charlemagne's sense of his obligations as Christian king as with the Franks' self-imposed role as converters of the heathen Saxons and Slavs¹⁷⁷.

Lorentz Gyömörey, a Catholic priest and scholar, states in this respect that,

During its lifespan, the Byzantine state did not make imperialist and conquering wars in the real sense of the term. Even its cultural and religious policy lacks the imperialist element as the Christianisation of the Slavs, to whom Byzantium gave the Liturgy and the Bible in their own language, shows. In the West, it was different: here, the imperialist spirit of Rome survived in the Roman-Latin Church [, i.e. Frankish Church]. The German peoples were Christianised in 'Latin,' and where existed the minimum of sperms pointing to a different evolution (on the basis of the Irish-Scottish monks' tradition), they were exterminated. ... the Christianisation of the Saxons by Charlemagne resulted in the loss of life of thousands of people. A Christianity distorted in such a way was the proper ideology for that revealing act of the self-presentation of the West, which could be called 'primordial fascism': the Crusades. ... in the handling of the American natives already hovers the shadow of Auschwitz¹⁷⁸.

In his book on the English resistance during the Frankish Norman invasion Rex writes:

... this book is written to go some ways towards filling the gap by presenting an unfamiliar facet of a familiar story. In doing so I was struck by the curious parallels between the situation in England during the first five years of Norman rule and that of France under Nazi Germany during the Second World War¹⁷⁹.

Nelson tells us about the conversion of the Saxons:

The Frank's power was won by the sword. ... The Saxon wars were prolonged and characterised by particular savagery, but sharp division ran along class lines as well as ethnic ones. The Franks found allies and

¹⁷⁷ McKitterick 2008, 311.

¹⁷⁸ Gyömörey 1977, 18-19.

¹⁷⁹ Rex 2014, 7.

collaborators among the Saxon aristocracy. Notoriously 4,500 Saxons were beheaded at Verden in 782... nobles too were victims, notably of the large-scale hostage-taking practiced by the Franks¹⁸⁰.

Yet this is not merely 'power won by the sword' but concomitantly the *Christianisation of Violence and the Violence-isation, as well as Violation, of Christianity itself*.

Let us come back now to the Panopticon picture of our discussion. In his quest for meaning, Fichtenau wisely yet partially tells us,

Ultimately, all history is a history of mentalities¹⁸¹.

True but not complete.

It is in this light that Romanides states in his, *The Cure of the Neurobiological Sickness of Religion, The Hellenic Civilization of the Roman Empire, Charlemagne's Lie of 794, and his Lie Today*:

The reason for this continuing distortion of Roman history is the fact that ancient and medieval histories of Europe had become the special domain of the Franco-Latin Universities which still continue to distort the sources of Roman history through implementing the lies of Charlemagne and Emperor Ludovicus II (855-875) in 871. As these Franco-Latin centers of research, like Oxford and Cambridge, became aware of the sources of Roman history they simply resorted to ridiculing them as products of a "Greek" desire for making everything Greek. But there is a big difference between the sources themselves which are simply there because inherited from the past and the deliberate falsification of these sources in order to force them to repeat the historical dogmas-lies of Emperors Charlemagne and Ludovicus II¹⁸².

The polymath Kantorowicz, who was equally wise, left a strangely crypto-Roman heritage to his pupils at Berkeley – touching a theme that we have seen previously in our discussion:

The so-called Middle Ages—no matter what the term may have implied originally—is a period which really should link the Greco-Roman Antiquity to Modern Times. However Academic Tradition in practically all countries has unfortunately bound together "Mediaeval and Modern History" too closely. Whereas there are plenty of professorships of Mediaeval and Modern History, there hardly exists an academic chair for "Ancient and Mediaeval History." This approach has become imperative ever since this

¹⁸⁰ Nelson 1996, xxii.

¹⁸¹ Fichtenau 1993, xvii.

¹⁸² Father John Romanides 1977 (Part 1).

former No-man's land of history, called Late Antiquity, has been discovered¹⁸³.

Of course, the creation of this 'No-man's land of history', or rather this anti-Roman Medieval void, was Carolingian in inception and praxis, dichotomising Romanity as the continuum of the ancient Greco-Roman world and the Roman Christian reality ('Byzantium') - a false path that Western academia genetically follows to our days:

But Charles... and... learned friends... It seems that the word 'Europe' which had hitherto had a purely geographical meaning, acquired, in their usage, a political sense. When they used the word 'Europe', they came to mean the political aspirations of the Christian west in contrast to Byzantine claims to universal dominion. During the crucial years the ruler of Byzantium was a woman, and in Charles's circle it was stressed that it was impossible for a woman to exercise the highest authority in Christendom¹⁸⁴.

Indeed, the anti-Roman Carolingian incubation period lasted about two centuries, from the 8th to the 10th century AD. From the end of 10th century to the end of the 13th century, anti-Hellenic/anti-Roman consolidation followed. It possessed two interrelated dimensions: one internal and one external – both anti-Hellenic/anti-Roman. In the Ottonian period, the Lombard bishop of Cremona, historian, diplomat and a chief advisor to Otto I (r. 962 - 973), Liutprand (c. 920–972 AD), in his *Relatio de Legatione Constantinopolitana* (12.) wrote:

We Lombards, of course, Saxons, Franks, Lotharingians, Bajoarians, Sueni, Burgundians, have so much disdain [for the Romans and their emperors] that when we convulse [with anger] against our enemies, we perform no other act of disrespect, save that of [yelling]: Roman!, this alone, i.e., the Roman name, meaning whatever is ignoble, timid, avaricious, licentious, deceitful, and, indeed, whatever is evil¹⁸⁵.

Yet as Romanides writes,

Liutprand's tirade against the Romans, just quoted, reveals the fact that he knew very well that East and West Romans were one nation, and that the emperor in Constantinople was the real emperor of the Romans. This tirade also reveals the fact that Liutprand was not aware of the prevailing theory among modern European historians that the Germanic nations became one

¹⁸³ Kantorowicz 2016, xxi.

¹⁸⁴ Fichtenau 1963, 64.

¹⁸⁵ Migne, *Patrologiae Latina* PL 136:915.

nation with the Romans in Western Europe. As is clear from Liutprand, the Germanic peoples of his time would have been insulted by such claims¹⁸⁶.

And the natural consequence followed during the Crusades where,

...the harm done by the crusaders to Islam was small in comparison with that done to the Eastern Christians¹⁸⁷.

All this was effected mainly through a Frankish, mono-manic adherence to the worldly metaphysics-based, pseudo-Platonizing theology of Augustine of Hippo, a theology that was fundamentally driven by a Gnostic Manichaean spirit (either via wide-open adherence or even via seeming antithesis).

The key development of the period as far as Ecumenicity is concerned is the permanent fall of the Roman Papacy to the Frankish conquerors. In our view, the criticism by contemporaries like those in Thietmar of Merseburg's *Chronikon*, in which Otto III (r. (983 -) 996 - 1002) "had gone too Greek"¹⁸⁸ were very much erroneously true. True in that the Ottonian policies exoterically (monkey-like-mimicking) looked like Roman ('Byzantine') policies, and erroneous as those policies had been esoterically drained of their Roman life-blood-spirit and partially refilled with a new Frankish ichor.

Saint Augustine: the Crushing Frankish Giant, or Roman Christian Marginal Thinker

But what about Saint Augustine's place in Christianity?

The Old Testament-oriented Carolingians subdued the united Roman Greek and Latin Fathers of Ecumenical Christianity to a specific understanding of Augustinian theology *via* disjoining incorporeal violence in a manner analogous to that which the Carolingian had incorporated the various Romans and others into their world, typically cutting them off from their origins.

Despite its admirable level of scholarship in relation to detail, archival work, extensive uses of documented sources, etc., Western historiography (at the core of its conceptions of Christianity), fails to admit and or/discern that Frankish Carolingian Catholicism and its later forms did not establish or renovate the Roman Catholic Church, i.e. the Universal Church (or else, Roman Ecumenical Orthodox Christianity), but exterminated it and founded

¹⁸⁶ Father John Romanides 1981.

¹⁸⁷ Runciman 1951, 474.

¹⁸⁸ Reuter 1993, 401.

in its place ‘the Church of the philosophical Christianophanic Universal’, Frankish Catholicism; as it did not establish or renovate Latin Christianity as such but forced into its place ‘a Christianity in Latin; it did not focus on the Roman Latin Fathers, but rather exterminated them, if only by eclectic and selective incorporation of (and into) one essential Church Father who wrote in Latin, the North African Saint Augustine. This theological submission took place until the end, as van Nieuwenhove summarises the situation in the Frankishised West:

It is hardly an exaggeration to describe medieval theology as a footnote to Augustine¹⁸⁹.

Instead of the Carolingian Franks attempting to rectify the various errors present in Augustinian theology in light of the doctrinal framework of the One Apostolic and Catholic Church of Ecumenical Roman Orthodox Christianity, they chose deliberately to reject its correct path and to follow its erroneous parts, while, at the same time, going so far as to label their ‘project’, *Correctio* and *Innovatio* for ‘Roman Catholic Christianity as such’!!! As if it is even conceivable that the Ineffable Uncreated Being, Life as such, can be corrected by an albeit innovative yet created intellect – and it is not a mere matter of magnitude (finite in relation to infinite, temporal in relation to eternal, etc.) but, most crucially, a matter of two modes of being (natures) that in regard to what they are in themselves possess nothing in common whatsoever – and, yet, at the same time, they are absolutely related...

It seems that the Carolingians and their historical heirs have been willing to follow Saint Augustine’s guidance in all things except humility. Despite his ‘innovative’ interpretations of some key issues, Saint Augustine had never dreamed of considering himself as someone outside the Roman Ecumenical Catholic Orthodox Church - let alone of calling it, ‘Greek’!!! He knew that he was a part of Christian doctrine, not the only ‘determinant’ – to him such thought would have been nothing less than devilish. Seen within its overall natural religious framework, i.e., Roman Orthodox Catholic Christianity, Saint Augustine is an extremely marginal yet, despite his many errors, profitable theologian. A notable example of this is the Roman Orthodox English Saint, the Venerable Bede (672/673 – 735 AD) by whom “Augustine’s overall authority is acknowledged, but Bede does not feel

¹⁸⁹ van Nieuwenhove 2014, 2-3. This is something that Father John Romanides had been arguing out for many decades.

obliged to follow him in every detail, let alone in crucial theories"¹⁹⁰. That line is also followed by the first Christian Ecumenical Roman Ottoman Patriarch of Constantinople, Saint Georgios Kourtesios Gennadios Scholarios (c. 1400–c. 1473 AD), in his Treatise on the Frankish *Filioque*:

I say that even if Augustine has said that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son too, from this does not follow that the Catholic [i.e., Roman Orthodox] *Ecclesia* has to be altered because Augustine thinks so. It is the *Ecclesia* that sets the laws of faith to Augustine and to any other Saint for that matter; it is not the *Ecclesia* that is to be regulated by Augustine – nor such need exists – in the formula: Augustine said so, so that is it. This prerogative is only safeguarded by way of the canonical Scriptures and the Ecumenical Councils¹⁹¹.

Thus, “in his time his influence was limited ... The [Frankish] Middle Ages recognized the authority of Augustine”¹⁹². Yet by arbitrarily dislocating his thought from that overall framework of which he was a part during his lifetime, those who have been anti-conciliar-ly augmenting his theology to the level of an almost monarchical infallibility (anticipating its Papal equivalent) have themselves turned his blessed sainthood into a caricature of near heresy – in that this theology is sponsored as the determinant of Roman Christianity as such. For one should not forget that the original Greek word, *αἵρεσις* (heresy), generally meant ‘choice, free-willed choice, a school of philosophical thought’ against the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Orthodox Church: *Innovatio* and Heresy are not so much apart. And yet for someone from a Western milieu such an external depiction would necessarily, and rightfully, be distressingly alarming. But this, in turn, presupposes both a specific understanding of the notion of dogma as such, as well as the truly terrible consequences, in mundane terms, that the accusation of ‘heresy’ has brought upon human beings over the course of Western history – see Moore’s relevant work. Yet, one will be equally surprised to discover the true meaning of ‘dogma’ in the framework of Roman Catholic Orthodox Christianity: “dogma is the ‘transliteration’ into created words (concepts, statements, emotions, etc.) of the lived-out experience of human beings that have tasted the Uncreated in God’s [*Supra*] Realm, where ‘you can do no wrong’ ...”¹⁹³:

¹⁹⁰ Pollmann 2010, 422.

¹⁹¹ Saint Georgios Kourtesios Gennadios Scholarios, PG 160:694B.

¹⁹² Pollmann 2007, 28-29.

¹⁹³ Retoulas 2022, 70.

The only thing that can be called dogma from the Orthodox tradition is the expression of the lived-out experience of *theosis*. And in turn, these dogmas, which is the expression, are also the guides towards the experience of *theosis* – just as in the positive sciences, past experience, description and expression guide the students into the reoccurrence of the experience. And this cycle that we find in the positive sciences is similarly present in the Patristic tradition¹⁹⁴.

Or, as Bishop Kallistos (Ware) of Diokleia informed us: “[d]ogmas are nothing else than the crystallization of that which the saints have experienced in prayer [i.e., theophanies], while prayer in its turn is the dogmas of the faith affirmed existentially”.

To return to our point about the Augustine’s place in Western religious traditions, Pollmann aptly states in her insightful conclusions:

Augustine’s self-fashioned ideas of progress and of the contextuality of his thinking more or less disappear in the early Middle Ages, with the exception of Eriugena [(c. 815 – c. 877)]. The proclaimed insecurity of Augustine is hardly ever referred to, he is an authority on which one can rely or to which one can refer almost as to the Bible itself, despite Augustine’s protestations against this in his *Epistula* 143.2 that his works do not admit of unanswerable vindication; it is not impiety to reject what he says like in the case of the Bible, where the message is never false, but possibly our interpretation is. By later readers Augustine can be used instead of Greek sources, his version of the Bible can be quoted instead of the Vulgate. *But maybe all this has less to do with his own authority rather than with the need of later ages to create such an authority*¹⁹⁵.

The Carolingian Franks invented, and their successors reshaped and propagated, the authority of Saint Augustine to match their own aggressive military characteristics and feudal structures. In this respect, the question of the possible reasons for the monodromic Carolingian adherence to the power-centric intellectualisations of Saint Augustine during their ‘assimilation’ of Roman Christianity is nowhere academically asked. So, we never reach a more mature investigation as to how the religious related to the politico-structural realities of the Charles I-derived Reich(s): how are the spiritual, the intelligible and the corporeal inter-related and how do they inter-operate in the Western case – save Romanides.

And there should be no apprehension in calling Augustinian religious understandings ‘intellected’, ‘intectualisations’, etc. for they were exactly

¹⁹⁴ Father John Romanides (in Metropolitan Hierotheos 2010, 110).

¹⁹⁵ Pollmann 2010, 423, emphasis ours.

that: mere human thought constructs (valuable yes, but when live-out as monocratically autonomous, deadly – literally and metaphorically). In regard to identifying with the characteristics of the common substratum in Saint Augustine's variety of thought, Pollmann states:

I wish to emphasize that Augustine was not a scholar in the traditional sense of the word, but an often original, speculative writer¹⁹⁶.

And, for reasons that will become clear further on in our discussion, the speculative was not part of what Roman Christianity associated with Theology as such. No empirically verified, lived-out experience with the Truth Himself, i.e., the products of *Theosis* tried out and confirmed by the *Ecclesia* could entertain human notions of originality, innovation, choice, speculation, reform, progress, regression, etc. whether intellectual, emotional, or of whatever human faculty you might imagine, in the way these are perceived and exercised in the mundane world.

Among the misfortunes of mainstream Western historiography is the fact that, until recently, the field has utterly failed to even recognise - let alone accept (indeed it has not) – that Carolingian Rule constituted a point of departure for Western European history, i.e., of Frankishised Western Europe. As Howe writes,

There is a new Carolingian Renaissance, not the ninth-century cultural reawakening that this label usually designates but a contemporary rebirth of interest in the Carolingian world. Charlemagne had always attracted attention, even though his attempt to create a new *imperium Christianum* was long viewed as a quixotic dead end. But after competing nation states nearly destroyed themselves in two world wars, [Western] Europeans began to take another look, and now they hail Charlemagne as the creator of the first Common Market, "the Father of Europe". ... Instead of the twilight of Antiquity, the age of Charlemagne now seems more like a new dawn¹⁹⁷.

Indeed,

...when all possible consideration has been given to the notion of the continuity and integration of ancient civilization, and to the concept that this civilization provided the building blocks for the social and political structure that we call medieval, it must be admitted that after all Frankish civilization as it emerged in the time of Charlemagne was a new one - if only because its geographical boundaries and its racial components were different. As we pursue the history of this era we see the centers of political life and

¹⁹⁶ Pollmann 2007, 32.

¹⁹⁷ Howe 2016, 15-16.

civilization shifting from the Mediterranean to western and northern Europe, northern and central Italy, western Germany, and to England, southern Scotland and Ireland. When Christianity was taken to regions outside the Roman Empire, the peoples of these lands were trained to accept the ways of Roman civilization, including the intellectual heritage of the Greeks and Romans, even though they had been totally unaffected by the way of life of these ancient peoples. Whatever they accepted they transformed in accordance with their own customs and traditions. From whatever angle one looks at the Carolingian age, without doubt it was the "First Europe" that was born in this period¹⁹⁸.

In the case of the fall of the British Isles to the Franks:

As a concept, the Norman Conquest usually consists of two parts, the establishment of effective Norman power and a radical break with the past or a turning point¹⁹⁹.

Summarily, as Robert Ian Moore states in his pioneering if neglected, *The First European Revolution c. 970 – 1215*, concerning the Graeco-Roman and the Judaeo-Christian pasts:

It is often said, that these legacies shaped or formed [Western] Europe. They did not. They provided an essential stock of materials, certainly – social, economic and institutional as well as cultural and intellectual – but from that stock, ... the men and women of the eleventh and the twelfth centuries took what they wanted for their own intricate and highly idiosyncratic construction and discarded what they did not want²⁰⁰.

In her book, *Those of My Blood: Creating Noble Families in Medieval Francia*, Constance Brittain Bouchard provides a racial-institutional link with the modern West, i.e., modern Frankism.

Yet medievalists know better than anyone how much these people were our ancestors: not just of course our biological ancestors, although the same blood of which they were so acutely aware flows unrecognized today in the veins of anyone of western European descent, but also our institutional ancestors, the first creators of the structures we now consider modern²⁰¹.

¹⁹⁸ Easton and Wieruszowski 1961, 4.

¹⁹⁹ Kapelle 1979, 234.

²⁰⁰ Moore 2000, 2.

²⁰¹ Bouchard 2001, 175.

From the 10th-11th centuries AD: From Carolingian Kleptocracy to the Phantoms of Esoterism

Romanity and Hellenity in the West has been subjected to extreme Frankensteinisation ever since. Whatever Frank-enstein-like semblance to Roman realities the Frankish Kingdoms had, it was basically seen,

...during the Middle Ages until roughly 1300 A. D., until in the West the "Byzantine style" was abolished in every respect²⁰².

As Augustinianism as such distorted both the ancient Greek past (especially Platonism yet Platonic) and the Christian teachings (as Christian), the ones who catapulted Augustine to the status of almost the sole determinant of the Church dogmas were busy doing exactly both. As it will soon become apparent, the next distortion of Romanity/Hellenity after that of Thomist Scholasticism would come in the supposedly Philhellenism of Renaissance Franks that continues to this very day.

The anti-Roman, Frankish spirit continues to pulsate in the modern title, 'Father of Europe', Charles the Great. For if there ever was a legitimate and truly perceived continuation between Rome and the Frankish West, one would logically expect that such a title would have gone to the formerly pagan Christian Emperor of the unified Roman Empire and founder of the New Rome (Constantinople), Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus Augustus (272-337 AD), or Saint and Emperor Constantine the Great, "a man whose cultural and spiritual renewal of the Roman Empire gave birth to the idea of a unified Christian Europe underpinned by a commitment to religious tolerance"²⁰³. Yet in the post-Frankish-Renaissance historiography in particular, Emperor Constantine generally receives very nasty treatment from Western scholars (e.g. Edward Gibbons, and, Jacob Burckhardt) – partly understandably so, since the medieval Franks (especially Charlemagne and his propagandists) had deliberately connected his name with their version of Christian dogmas, the ones that brought forth the Inquisition, the Conquistadors, etc. ... - all anathemas in the eyes of the early modern and modern Frankish scholars. The problem is that, while the violence Constantine exhibited truly pales in the face of that of Charlemagne, more often than not Western academia provides the latter with a plethora of indulgences, and practically admiration.

²⁰² Kantorowicz 1942/1944, 32.

²⁰³ Stephenson (2014); Kousoulas (2007); and Leithart (2010).

What is most astonishing is the unspeakable amount of violence and wretchedness associated with the Carolingian rule that Western academia, in general, is willing to pass, make irrelevant, or mention offhandedly. As one strolls the literature one remains astonished by the general portrayal of the shining intellectual, religious, cultural and institutional brightness of the Carolingian centre and its followers by the mainstream Western academia of the period. It is certainly a reflection of Carolingian rulership in itself that the various conquered peoples are practically invisible, their condition usually examined in assimilating glosses and hardly in meaningful detail (thank God for the exception of Fichtenau!). The same is largely true for the Ottonians (919-1024 AD):

One of the major gaps, it seems to me, it seems to me, in the recent historiography of Ottonian Saxony, has been the absence of any attempt to show how the elaborate structures of logistics, ritual and consciousness impinged on the great bulk of the population, on whom the producers of these things in the last resort depended²⁰⁴.

The description of the deathbed scene of Otto I (912–973 AD) by Widukind of Corvey (c. 925–after 973 AD), when “he stretched out his hand to the *pauperes* ... is clearly offering a conventional picture of royal piety ... But this is at least a rare moment in Ottonian historical writing when people outside the political community enter on stage at all”²⁰⁵. The Carolingian and Ottonian Franks seem to live in perpetual fear of their environment and, above all, the conquered Roman Christian subjects: ruling in fear by fear through fear, all of them absolutist – where even the Saints were meant to fear them (their appearances are steeped in external moralism and even etiquette!!!):

...in the Ottonian ecclesiastical establishment's treatment of the lower-class and egalitarian saint Hilmerad with his lower-class followers, we can see considerable insecurities. Most significant of all are the frequent anecdotes in Ottonian hagiography telling how, when saints appeared in visions to servants instructing them to take messages to their masters or mistresses, they had to do so repeatedly, and sometimes even to use physical violence on them, before the servants would act. For the saints themselves to use intermediaries in this way was courteous aristocratic behaviour; it would often have seemed ill-bred (and might no doubt have risked evoking a response appropriate to ill-breeding) to appear directly in the dreams of the intended recipients. But the terror of those who were expected to take the

²⁰⁴ Reuter 1998 b., 145.

²⁰⁵ Reuter 1998 b., 146.

*messages says something, at least, about how effectively the Ottonian political elite's collective self-representation centred on the king and maintained a distance between them and everyone else*²⁰⁶.

Even the Lord Jesus Christ is turned into a creature of this 'courteous aristocratic behaviour' (with 'political correctness' its modern offspring) in the face of the great Carolingian King. Written in c. 1095, the anonymous *Historia* of the Aquitanian abbey of Charroux ("a Carolingian house"), tells us about a (supposed) trip of Charlemagne to Jerusalem during which,

...the consecration of the host during mass, the right hand of God appeared, placing the Holy Virtue (Christ's Foreskin) in a chalice upon the altar. The Christ-child then addressed Charles directly, saying, "Most noble prince, take up this small presence with veneration, as it is of My true body and blood...."²⁰⁷.

And all this madness was called Roman Catholic Christianity!!! It was once said that Protestantism is in essence individualised Papism or the infallibilisation of the myriad of individuals – take not: personhood and individualism are not the same thing. Transposing this Ottonian worldview into the language of today, in my opinion, you get the following, borrowing a quote from Harold Bloom (1930-2019 AD), who identifies "the American Religion" as a form of Gnosticism that cuts across denominations:

...unlike body and even soul, the American self is no part of the Creation, or of evolution through the ages. *The American self is not the Adam of Genesis but is a more primordial Adam, a Man before there were men or women. Higher and earlier than the angels, this true Adam is as old as God, older than the Bible, and is free of time, unstained by mortality. Whatever the social and political consequences of this vision, its imaginative strength is extraordinary.* No American pragmatically feels free if she is not alone, and no American ultimately concedes that she is part of nature²⁰⁸.

Now its exegetical reply:

And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."²⁰⁹

Reuter's work has been a notable exception in the sense that it brought to the fore the aggressive militarist nature of the Carolingian Franks and its

²⁰⁶ Reuter 1998b., 146, emphasis ours.

²⁰⁷ Gabriele 2013, 45.

²⁰⁸ Bloom 2013, emphasis added.

²⁰⁹ Luke 10:18.

role in their external and internal affairs and system of governance. In his 1984 essay, *Plunder and Tribute in the Carolingian Empire*, Reuter summarized the situation as “institutionalised plunder”²¹⁰. As Nelson elaborates:

Tim coined the phrase ‘institutionalised plunder’ for this system: it produced and reproduced the payments and counter payments that held sustainable social relations in place, and to the Franks (including Charlemagne) it was part of what they called justice, i.e. it was legit. (Modern Russians call their form of it *kleptocracy* [lit. Gr, rule of thievery]) – a sure sign that it’s not working well there.) Charlemagne’s system did work well, anyway as well as could be expected. It produced what St Augustine coolly called ‘peace of a kind’: that was in *The City Of God*, the one book named Charlemagne’s biographer as having been among the emperor’s favourite listening while he ate his roast beef and drank his wine in moderation...²¹¹.

Which of the two dictums (maybe both?) (originally intended for a later period) is applicable here we leave to the reader to decide: the original C. C. Bayley’s “Scratch a German Emperor and you find a tribal chieftain” and/ or Timothy Reuter’s paraphrase of it, “Scratch a German Emperor and you find a dynastically minded magnate”²¹².

At first glance the above description by Nelson is not as straightforward as it seems. For while it readily concurs with Reuter’s almost mono-dimensional militarist dimension of Carolingian kingship, the reference to Saint Augustine serves in making it conditional. Nelson did put forward her “largely justified objections” in her book, *The Frankish World, 750 – 950*:

A fundamental (if not the only) explanation for Frankish persistence and commitment can hardly be other than what the sources say: a religious or ideological one. Material benefits were no doubt hoped for. But religion was no mere cloak for material interests. Even the immensely lucrative destruction of Avar power was partly motivated, it seems, by the idea of reproducing the Roman frontier along the Danube. The Franks’ identity in the Carolingian period had come to depend on their internalising the pope’s perception [our comment: this needs contextualisation badly] of them as a chosen people ruled by a divinely approved dynasty and the scholars’ view of their realm as reviving the Roman Empire²¹³.

²¹⁰ Reuter 1984, 87.

²¹¹ Nelson 2006, 12.

²¹² Reuter 1993, 410.

²¹³ Nelson 1996, xxix.

"Nelson contributed to this, but also Reuter himself, who thereby helped to create a paradigm shift that went straight against his earlier work – surely the mark of a great scholar"²¹⁴. To that calibration, one should not forget to mention the *ecclesia*-centred works of de Jong as well as that of McKitterick, especially, but not only, the Carolingian volume (c. 700 - c. 900) of the *New Cambridge Medieval History* (1995) (Paul Fouracre's article, *Frankish Gaul to 814*, is a case in point there).

In this episode of modern Frankish historiography, we find its most revealing, as well as most worrying, epistemological dimension in the absence of even the slightest attempt to explanatorily inter-relate the newly developing Carolingian doctrinal religious precepts (erroneously labelled 'Roman Catholic Christianity') and the extreme feudo-militarism of the Carolingians – Romanides' work does not count as a mainstream Western (Frankish) example. Yet it is such a discernible pattern, which was propagated and effected in various transformed and transformative forms both domestically and externally down the centuries, that only after being acknowledged and identified, can one decide to do something about it.

The revealing side of this episode is that, ultimately, unless an intelligible side ('ideology') is developed alongside power there can be no real foundation for coherent living – if only for the fact that, unless content and structures are differentiatedly bound together, one would be inherently schizophrenic and in perpetual conflict with his own self-understanding – this, in fact, explains the relatively short lifespans of Western political constructs throughout history (compared with their Roman counterparts). What is worrying is that this shows once again the endemic presence of 'vs.-type of relationships' manifested in the absolute homogeneity prevalent in Western (Frankish) dualistic milieus. Just, revisit the crucial Western-Frankish religious notion of *auctoritates* vs. *ratio*... What a worldisation!!! As we will see, Christian doctrine and militaristic power work hand and glove in the Western world – as they are typically derived from Enlightenment secular ideologies and power structures (not to say mention Nietzschean genealogy). For example, being him a Calvin's favourite, 'Saint' Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153 AD) is, by Christian standards, simply a murderous felon, not only in that he had written in his sermon, *De Laude novae militiae ad milites Templi*, that the religious Knight Templar,

...who kills for religion commits no evil but rather performs good, both for his people and himself. If he dies in battle, he gains heaven; if he kills his opponents, he avenges Christ. Either way, God is pleased²¹⁵.

²¹⁴ de Jong 2015, 12.

²¹⁵ Migne, *Patrologiae Latina* 182, 921-940.

but because before he had theoptically known Christ was even dictating new dogmas in His Name:

The true credit for ‘founding’ the mysticism of the High Middle belongs to Bernard of Clairvaux, who formulated a new mystical theology by attributing emotive impetus behind monastic piety to God himself...²¹⁶

Thus, this was the second Germanic rehabilitation of Christianity!!! If the direct Carolingian version had focused on distorting exoterism:

If there is one clear characteristic of Carolingian intellectual life it was the discussion about what exactly correct Christendom entailed, with more and less successful attempts at standardization of texts and practices²¹⁷,

its 11th century counterpart-aspirant focused on esoterism. Of course, in Roman Christianity ‘emotionalism’ as such, in God’s theophanic secret experiences, is but a satanic presence – as it is ‘rationalism’ as such. The Frankish West seems to have absorbed not an inkling of Christ’s teachings and work (albeit in legalistic or rationalistic terms), remaining entrenched in the Old Testament-oriented and partially-Greek or Gnostic philosophical Carolingian perceptions...

We have already mentioned the Frankish religio-philosophical dualistic entrapping reality and existence in mundane Manichaean-like *seemingly* antithetical pairs - essentially Augustine-derived perceptions – which have been insidiously affecting the cognitive skeleton of mainstream academia. The consequences of all this for the possibility of a prospective peer-reviewed publication from ‘dissident’ scholars can be pondered upon by the reader at will – incorporating of course the occasionally sporadic ‘deviation’. Indeed, the ground-breaking and edifying work of Yitzhak Hen on the Merovingian Franks is a case in point. For it seems that Hen had an uphill struggle in overcoming the hurdle of the Carolingian-ridden mainstream Western academia and its paradigms - with its propaganda-like argument about the supposed quasi-Christian, pagan character of the Merovingians. As Hen courageously tells us in his *Culture and Religion in Merovingian Gaul, A.D. 481-751*:

...to counter such an argument is not an easy task. It will result in an attack on the basic concept of early medieval history which is, paradoxically, rooted in a modern conception of society and religion²¹⁸.

²¹⁶ Fichtenau 1998, 200.

²¹⁷ Rhijh 2011, 312.

²¹⁸ Hen 1995, 252.

In short, the underlying reason being that the Merovingian Franks had been, on the whole, Roman Christians, i.e., Roman Germanic Christians – not Frankish Augustinians:

As long as the bishops were Roman, the unity of the Roman Church was preserved, in spite of theological conflicts. The same was true when Romanized Franks became bishops during Merovingian times and shared with Roman bishops church administration²¹⁹.

Historically speaking, the Western banality of 'Greek vs. Latin' is distortedly related to ancient Hellenic philosophy and later 'Byzantium' and Latinity to 'Romanity with a purely Latin spirit' in tandem with their 'Germanic conquerors', the Carolingian Franks.

Prehistory Breaks into Global History: The Establishment of the Frankish Looting Exports Co.

A couple of centuries after having self-excommunicated itself from the Roman Orthodox Catholic Ecumenical *Eccllesia* in 1054 AD as the branch that was cut off from the vine, it was exactly then that the early consolidating 'Frankish Domestic Enterprise' (Head Office: enslaved Western Europe) was to turn into a self-confident 'Imperialism International Inc.' in,

...the sea of change in the character of expansion from the former Carolingian heartlands in the eleventh century, and with it in the thoroughness of the incorporation into Latin Christendom not only of territories conquered after that point, but of those which had already been added in the great sweep of conversions around the periphery of the Carolingian and Ottonian world at the end of the first millennium. The newly formidable military capacity of the Latin West began to show itself in the 1030s...²²⁰.

In other words, just 20 years before the official Schism of the Frankish West from the Ecumenical Roman East. *Their main export product was pure apocalyptic violence.* There followed the fall of Toledo (1085 AD), Aversa (1030 AD), Melfi (1041 AD), the Eastern Roman provinces of Apulia and Calabria (by 1050s AD), Messina (1062 AD), Palermo (1072 AD), Sicily (1072 AD), Edessa/Urfa, Antioch, and Jerusalem (1097 – 1099 AD).

²¹⁹ Father John Romanides 1981.

²²⁰ Moore 2000, 183.

Jay Rubenstein's book, *Armies of Heaven: The First Crusade and the Quest for Apocalypse* epitomises the 'Christian ethos of the Crusaders' – its summary reads:

At Moson, the river Danube ran red with blood. At Antioch, the Crusaders—their saddles freshly decorated with sawed-off heads—indiscriminately clogged the streets with the bodies of eastern Christians and Turks. At Ma'arra, they cooked children on spits and ate them. By the time the Crusaders reached Jerusalem, their quest—and their violence—had become distinctly otherworldly: blood literally ran shin-deep through the streets as the Crusaders overran the sacred city...

The Crusades... Another hereditary instance of the Charlemagnism that permeates Western academia.

Despite an abundance of evidence, the apocalyptic crusade had not received its due, in part because historians mistrust our best and most abundant evidence for it: a collection of chronicles written by churchmen in France and Germany starting around the year 1107. Apocalyptic language permeates these books, but among all the available evidence, they have usually held a position of secondary importance²²¹.

Yet, at Clermont, Pope Urban II's Speech to the Crusader's bore all the signs of applied Manichaeism; the theme, Frankish Augustinianism vs. Islam (plus Roman Orthodox Christianity). 'Good' vs. 'Evil', Extermination or Extermination... - including that of Roman Orthodox Christians too...

On the fundamental level, the First Crusade was a *holy war*, a style of combat that was, in the 1090s, *altogether new*: a war fought on behalf of God and in fulfilment of His plan. It did not just provide soldiers with a new path to salvation, a way to use martial prowess to perform good deeds. It also enabled them to fight in battles longer and bloodier than any they had ever imagined. So full of pageantry and gore were the sieges of Nicea (May June 1097), Antioch (October 1097 June 1098), Ma'ara (November December 1098), and Jerusalem (June July 1099) that they surpassed earthly conflict, pointing soldiers toward heaven as well as giving them some experience of hell. When the survivors returned to Europe and relived their memories, cooler and more educated heads could only agree: They had witnessed the Apocalypse²²².

²²¹ Rubenstein 2011, xiii.

²²² Rubenstein 2011, xiii, emphasis ours.

In his *Ecstatic Transformation: On the Uses of Alterity in the Middle Ages*, Michael Uebel writes:

Guibert of Nogent, in his history of the First Crusade, describes a group of peasants in the crusading army called Tafurs, who, unarmed, naked, and hungry, stage a bizarre propagandistic event: 'When at Ma'arra - and wherever else - scraps of flesh from the pagans' bodies were discovered; when starvation forced our soldiers to the deed of cannibalism (which is known to have been carried out only in secret and as rarely as possible), a hideous rumor spread among the infidel: that there were men in the Frankish army who fed very greedily on the bodies of Saracens. When they heard this the Tafurs, in order to impress the enemy, roasted and bruised the body of a Turk over a fire as if it were meat for eating, in full view of the Turkish forces'²²³.

Rubenstein's article, "Cannibals and Crusaders" is an interesting reading in that respect. Kelley connects Frankish Cannibalism with its underlying pseudo-Christian theology:

The development of Western Christian theology since the 11th century may have set the stage for this 'zombie mass' with its bizarre recurring debate about whether or not the 'meat' in the Holy Eucharist – the bread that literally becomes flesh – is identical with the human flesh of the crucified Christ, or if it is just a kind of generic 'human meat.' The era of the Crusades did witness the innovation known as 'heart burial' in Frankish Europe. Heart burial was the idea that a noble Frank's heart should be separated from his or her freshly-dead corpse and buried separately.... Certainly heart burial was a Western misunderstanding of the original Christian tradition of relic veneration...²²⁴.

And he goes on to say that together with their (perhaps unwittingly) distortion of relic veneration and the goodness of the matter in general, during the Crusades:

... the Franks ... pervers[ed] the dogma of the Holy Eucharist. They used a new kind of Mass which seems to have been conceived as a dialectical 'anti-Moslem agape meal' (my term). For, as the *Chanson d'Antioche* shows, the commoners, the 'people,' saw the eating of the Muslims as the eating of human pork...²²⁵

And the matter echoes down into Western (Frankish) Modernity:

²²³ Uebel 2005, 46.

²²⁴ Kelley 2013.

²²⁵ Kelley 2013.

Though [Western] Christian Europeans shunned the cannibalism of the New World, they themselves in fact practiced cannibalism more systematically than any tribes in Canada or Brazil. Until around 1750, human fat, flesh, bone and blood (preferably drunk warm) were widely used and esteemed forms of medicine. Advocates and consumers included Francis Bacon, Robert Boyle and Charles II²²⁶.

Although we are rightfully familiar with the 6,000,000 terrible horrors of Auschwitz and its counterparts that sprung from where the Carolingian Reich was once, we are less often reminded of another Holocaust of far greater – indeed unimaginable – magnitude, the one that followed the discovery of the Americas by Frankish Christian Europe. As David Stannard shows in his generally balanced approach on the subject, *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World*:

The destruction of the Indians of the Americas was, far and away, the most massive act of genocide in the history of the world²²⁷.

By rather modest estimates,

the total extermination of many American Indian peoples and the near-extermination of others, [ended] in numbers that eventually totalled close to 100,000,000²²⁸.

Who then can blame Stannard for holding a litany of abuse against ‘Christianity’ up and down the ages? No one. However he is blameful in that he undiscerningly and falsely equates Christianity as such with the Frankish Christianophanic religious phenomenon. All this is ultimately a distinctive religio-political Carolingian innovative achievement – through the extermination of Roman Orthodox Christianity from Western Europe and from Western popular memory. And it almost succeeded in doing so in the ‘Byzantine core lands’ as well – save for and saved by the Ottoman conquest. The West’s secular phase saw two World Wars. *Something is rotten at the core* – of course, volition/disposition-wise not nature.

Charlemagne occupies the core of the 11th-12th century political imagination of the expanding Franks. Take for example, the oldest surviving important work of French literature, the c. 1100 Oxford *Chanson de Roland* (The Song of Ronald) which focuses on Charlemagne’s nephew and military magnate, Roland at the Battle of Roncevaux Pass in 778 AD. “Near the

²²⁶ Sugg 2008.

²²⁷ Stannard 1993, x.

²²⁸ Stannard 1993, 151.

beginning of the poem, Ganelon recounts how he had seen Ronald presenting Charlemagne with a golden apple representing 'the crowns of each and every king he had subjected'"²²⁹. Of course, the apple symbol is an aping of the symbol of Roman ecumenical 'Byzantine' dominion, i.e., an earth-symbolising sphere held in the left hand of statues of Roman Emperors such as Justinian I (483–565 AD). The poem is full of an anti-Roman conquering Frankish spirit, a guide to the past and the future to come for that matter.

Look again at Charlemagne's conquests [(include lands he had never conquered)]: West Francia, East Francia, much of Italy, Saxony, Poland, the British Isles, Iceland and Constantinople... encompassing virtually the whole of Christendom in the late eleventh century... note how Roland boasts that Charles holds Constantinople, which should probably be taken to mean the whole Eastern Empire, and note how seemingly insignificant Roland considers that conquest. The Byzantines [*sic.*] are fixed in Roland's list after the Poles and before the Saxons, just another people in Charles's heterogeneous empire²³⁰.

Of course, as Gabriele rightly points out: "The author's geography, however, is rather sketchy anyway. He is apparently quite familiar with the West Francia and displays a limited knowledge of Italy, but he seems to have been quite ignorant of lands to the East – save, of course, the fabled Constantinople"²³¹. In other words, the Frank remains totally ignorant of Romanity and the Roman lands as such. From ignorance to blasphemy: as God ignores and does not any more count the first murderer and son of fallen proudness, Cain and his lineage (Genesis 4 & 5), now, aping God in the reverse, the adversary powers belittling the godly forces of Christianity.

The centres of this unheard-of and demonic militarisation of Christianity were those areas where Germanic Franks were predominant:

The ritual of chivalry seems to have developed in the Rhineland, but the Roman liturgy, conservative for various reasons, remained hostile to any such official recognition of the new spirituality²³².

Indeed,

the *benedictio ensis* and the *benedictio vexilli* (the blessings of the sword and cross) are only found in the Romano-Germanic pontificals and were excluded

²²⁹ Gabriele 2013, 32.

²³⁰ Gabriele 2013, 33.

²³¹ Gabriele 2013, 33.

²³² Delaruelle 1971, 213.

from the Roman pontificals when there was a reaction in Rome against Germanic influence²³³.

Monastics personally involved in warfare – apart from the inner spiritual battle!!!²³⁴ Apart from corrupting its very nature, the implantation of militarism into one of the cores of Christianity entailed a physical violence that would soon reach apocalyptic levels in the dawn of the new millennium. It was no wonder that when the tsunami of Frankish exterminating militancy hit the Roman Christians in East during the Crusades, they literally lost it both dogmatically and physically.

Almost a decade later in 1213, the Roman ('Byzantine') metropolitan of Cyzicus in exile, Constantine Stilbes, wrote his *Aitiquata* or *Griefs* in which he strongly criticized the Franco-Latin clergy for their love of war, for their engagement in actual combat resulting in killing (including other Christians), for their teaching that those who died in war entered paradise by default, for the fact that a cross-bearing Catholic bishop had led the attack on Constantinople, and for numerous cases in which Western knights had ridden into Christian churches on horseback, slaughtering the Roman Orthodox Christians who had sought shelter there. He also castigated the 'Franco-Latins' as untrustworthy in regard to the Pope's claim that he possessed the authority to release them from oaths they would take in the future!²³⁵ And all this, 300 years before Pope Benedict XVI's 'first stage of dehellenisation' with no Pope's Protestant or modern secular 'dehellenizers' at sight! Yet, Pope Benedict XVI is fundamentally right: de-hellenisation - or, in Christian terms, de-Romanisation - did take place in the Christian West. Yet it did not originate from "the postulates of the Reformation in the sixteenth century"²³⁶, as the Pope liked to argue, but, 700 years before that!!!

In this framework, if the Pope remains within the confines of Frankish Catholic dogmatics, the essence of his call for the reversal of the apparent Protestant-led and generally modern Western 'dehellenisation' drive has been equally de-hellenising – and in reality, equally de-Judaicing – for a far longer period of time than that of those whom he criticises. But does Pope Benedict XVI - who ended up being the first pope to resign since Pope Gregory XII in 1415, and the first to do so on his own initiative since Pope Celestine V in 1294 - strictly uphold the Frankish Catholic framework or

²³³ Delaruelle 1971, 213.

²³⁴ For an engagement with the general subject in the Frankish domains, see, Smith, Katherine Allen. *War and the Making of Medieval Monastic Culture*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013.

²³⁵ See Darrouzès 1963.

²³⁶ Pope Benedict XVI 2006).

was what he proposed something far beyond Frankish theological precepts? Such a question can be posed since even his adopted papal name suggests that he was fully aware of the true theology of the ancient Roman Church:

A towering, yet humble and pious saint, who relied heavily on two other great Orthodox Fathers (St. Basil the Great and St. John Cassian), St Benedict of Nursia (d. 543 AD) was the great Roman Father "who brought the saintly flowering of the eastern desert to the [then] Orthodox [Roman] west. The fact that many people associate him with Roman Catholicism is neither here nor there. The Bishop of the Roman Catholics has taken the name of Benedict, but remember Saint Benedict belongs to the undivided Orthodox Christian Church as it existed during the early Christian years. He was, and is, completely Orthodox!"²³⁷

The 'Byzantine' Empire: Ultimately, A Gnostic Myth

Within this effectively anti-Roman Frankish paradigm, there must have been no other historically non-existing and fictitious entity on which so much ink and electricity has been consumed other than the *soi-disant* 'Byzantine Empire' – except perhaps, in truth,

[...] no state titled Byzantium by either its population or its government ever existed. This conventional label appeared only in the sixteenth century, well after the fall of the empire. The people who inhabited the empire's towns and countryside in the Middle Ages continued to use the tradition-honored title, the Roman Royal Authority (*basileia ton Rhomaion*), as their self-designation. ... The state was called *Romania* by its western neighbours and *Rum* by its eastern ones. And there are still scholars who prefer 'the Eastern Roman Empire' to the 'Byzantine Empire'. Since, then, no emperor, senate, or audacious rebels ever abolished the Roman Empire and introduced in its stead a new Byzantine state, any date chosen as marking the transition from Roman antiquity to medieval Byzantium remains as conventional as the name of Byzantium itself²³⁸.

Yet, as we will see, there has been no conventionality in the essentially Frankish invention of the 'Byzantine Empire', a historical term in line with the spirit of Charles I's politico-religious dictates that bypass, with surprising and suppressing ease, the reality of the only legitimate transition from "the ancient and lesser Rome" to the *Roma Nova*, Constantinople, "the later, more powerful city"²³⁹ and its founder, Constantine the Great. By the

²³⁷ Fr. Dr. Photios, n.d.

²³⁸ Kazhdan and Epstein 1990, 1.

²³⁹ Psellus [c. 1017 - 1078] 1966, 177.

beginnings of the 4th century A.D., Constantinople represented not only the New Rome but also the ‘Second Jerusalem’, particularly “due to the holiness which secured for it [its numerous] monastic centres”²⁴⁰.

By the mid-fifth century... Constantinople had become not just indelibly Christian, but sacred as well. In 446, the Mesopotamian monk Daniel the Stylite, on the road to visit the holy sites of Palestine, met a mysterious figure who told him in no uncertain terms not to go to Jerusalem, “but go to Byzantium, and you will see a second Jerusalem, namely Constantinople. There you will rejoice in the shrines of martyrs and imposing places of prayer...” Accordingly, Daniel headed north and set up his column in a suburb of the Byzantine capital. Ever since Daniel received his spiritual directions, we find occasional references to Constantinople as the New Jerusalem²⁴¹.

In pairing fashion within ChristianoIslamic Romanity, even in the 18th century – a de-Romanising era - the Islamic *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* (‘the unity-of-Being’ Sufism, both Sunnism and Bektaşî/Alevî) spirit with its innumerable convents (*dergâhs*, *tekkes*) permeated Ottoman life, for apart from the names *Konstantiniyye* or Istanbul, the Ottomans commonly referred to their capital as “*Âsitâne* meaning ‘Central *Tekye*’, *Dergâh-ı Muallâ* (Sublime *Tekye*), and *Dersaâdet* (‘Land of Peace’)”²⁴². Even the Sultan’s Palace was called “*Dergâh-ı âlî*”²⁴³. As long as it protected Christianity, Ottoman Konstantiniyye was the Third Rome...

And concerning the de-Romanisation period, Saint Nicodemus the Hagiorite (1749-1809 AD) writes in his exegesis of the Apostolic Canon XLVI, found in his, *Πηδάλιον τῆς νοητῆς νηός, τῆς Μίας Ἀγίας, Καθολικῆς καὶ Ἀποστολικῆς τῶν ὀρθοδόξων Ἐκκλησίας* [*The Rudder of the Noetic Boat, the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Ecclesia of the Orthodox (Christians)*] that,

...two kinds of governance and correction are kept in the *Ecclesia* of Christ. The first kind is called *Precision*, and the other kind is called *Oikonomia* and *Concurrence* (*Συγκατάβασις*) by which the stewards (‘economists/*oikonomists*’) of the Spirit direct the salvation of souls, sometimes with the former, sometimes with the latter. Thus, the Holy Apostles in the already mentioned Canons, and all the aforementioned Saints use the *Precision* kind, and that is why they reject with completeness/perfection the baptisms of the heretics;

²⁴⁰ Hieromonk Chrysostomos of the Koutlounous Monastery/ Koutlounousianos (Hieromonk) 2008, 39.

²⁴¹ Ousterhout 2006, 2.

²⁴² Kılıç 1999, 13.

²⁴³ Noyan (Dedebaba) 2002, 13.

while the two Ecumenical Synods [(the First and the Sixth Ones)] made use of the *Oikonomia*, and thus [the baptism of some heretics] they accepted while [that of others] did not²⁴⁴.

According to Saint Nicodemus, the fact that the Ecumenical Roman Church accepted the entrance to the Christian Church of Papist "Latins" – that is members of the Frankish Augustinians of the Religious Institution of the Philosophical *Kathόλον* (Universal), i.e., 'the Congregation of the Philosophical Universal' (Western Catholicism) - only with Chrismation shows that for the Christian Church "they are heretics" and their Baptism "is null and void (*ψευδώνυμον*, pseudo-naming) from the point of view of both [Apostolic] *Precision* and [Synodical] *Oikonomia*"²⁴⁵. And in his exposition of Canon XLVII, he states that this particular *oikonomia* was once done for the following reason:

Our people *oikonomised* and accepted the baptism of the Latins, according to the second kind, for at that time, our Basileion/Empire was at its deathbed, but Papism was at its peak and controlled all the worldly Powers of the Kings of Europe; thus it was out of necessity for if this *oikonomia* had not taken place, the Pope could gather the Latin nations against the Eastern [Christians] taking them prisoners, killing them and doing all kinds of evils against them²⁴⁶.

And now enter the Ottoman Shield:

*But now that all these evils have passed since the Providence of God set such a guard over us[, i.e. the Ottoman Empire], where it put an end to the pride of these high-minded ones, now I say, now that the rage of Papism cannot touch us in anything (that) concerns our [faith], what is the use of oikonomia anymore? Indeed, Oikonomia has both measures and limits, and it neither lasts forever nor is [set to be] limitless*²⁴⁷.

In other words, not only did the Ottoman Empire protect Christianity but it assisted the faith in becoming heresy-free. Moreover, from Saint Nicodemus' evaluation as well as his *Neon Martyrologion*, we understand that the phenomenon of the Neomartyrs (a particular type of Sainthood of certain people actively seeking martyrdom (usually a means of exoneration after having previously committing apostasy to Islam, or under Muslim

²⁴⁴ Saint Nicodemus and Hieromonk Agapius 1886, 55.

²⁴⁵ Saint Nicodemus and Hieromonk Agapius 1886, 56.

²⁴⁶ Saint Nicodemus and Hieromonk Agapius 1886, 57.

²⁴⁷ Saint Nicodemus and Hieromonk Agapius 1886, 57.

pressure in individual cases)), which Saint Nicodemus praises and attributes to five specific reasons, was of a parochial personal nature being not the rule due to, for example, an Ottoman systematic anti-Christian stance in general. Thus, in this way even Metropolitan Hierotheos (Vlahos) is rather forced to write that “during the Turkish rule there was security in the matters of faith, the exercise of *oikonomia* was not necessary [(only of Apostolic *Precision*)], according to Saint Nicodemus. Thus, in this manner of thinking, in addition to reasons relating to the dogmas [of Faith], there are also introduced both pastoral and social reasons”²⁴⁸. We should also not forget that, diachronically from the time of Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed, the Ottoman Sultanic *berats*, i.e., the appointment certificates issued by the Ottoman authorities for the Orthodox Patriarchs, systematically stipulated that: “No unbeliever shall be converted to Islam by force against his/her consent”²⁴⁹. Sir Steven Runciman’s *Captivity* thesis does not hold well from an overall Christian point of view, and particularly, not at all from the perspective of the Christian 8th Aeon, the Aeon of Aeons.

Returning to the 11th century AD, there remains the perceptions and attitudes of the Empire of Charles I and the post-Charles I Carolingians’ attitudes towards the free part of the Roman Empire in the East. From Charlemagne’s point of view, the latter was seen derogatively as crypto-Pagan ‘Greek’ (essentially meaning a ‘nation, a peoples’ of idolaters). And this is pure antinomy since the key ontologically deadly dimension introduced by the Carolingian Franks into Christianity was an intellect-based, philosophical understanding as its highest form - by way of a distorted reading of ancient Greek Platonic philosophy *via* Saint Augustine who thought Platonism was compatibly salvific for Christianity, providing also a way out of his former Manichaeism. As if the Lord Jesus Christ was another mere prophet or philosopher. Charles I’s friend, Alcuin told him:

If your zeal were imitated by others, we might see a new Athens rising up in Francia, more splendid than the old Athens, for it would be Christ’s Athens²⁵⁰.

Here ‘not to be heard’ is not synonymous with ‘not be mentioned at all’; inner distortion is cancer to outer resemblance.

Romanity and Hellenity – and as will see, also Ottomanity/Turkishness – are so vitally, organically and indeed inter-encapsulatingly related that Frankism – alas, Westernism in modernity - could not attack one without

²⁴⁸ Metropolitan of Nafpaktos and Saint Vlasios Hierotheos (Vlachos) 2016, 517.

²⁴⁹ See the official *berats* in Çolak and Bayraktar-Tellan 2019.

²⁵⁰ Sergeant, Kindle Locations 2586-2587.

exterminating (utterly or by internal infiltrating deformation) the other. Neither can Hellenity be separated from Romanity nor Romanity severed from Hellenity without the loss of both. The former took place in the Ottonian, neo-Greek Kingdom, the latter in Western Europe after Charlemagne.

It is not accidental that during *the 1024 Sack of Constantinople*, the Crusaders wreaked havoc upon Roman Orthodox temples and relics but equally upon ancient Helleno-Roman monuments and artefacts. The famous Roman historian, Nicetas Choniates (c. 1155-1217 AD) laments:

These barbarians, haters of the beautiful, did not allow the statues standing in the Hippodrome and other marvelous works of art to escape destruction, but all were made into coins. Thus great things were exchanged for small ones, those works fashioned at huge expense were converted into worthless copper coins. Also overturned was [the statue of] Herakles, mighty in his mightiness... [destroyed] figures had been set up by Caesar Augustus at Actium (which is Nikopolis in Hellas)... Nor, of a truth, did they keep their hands off the hyena and the she-wolf which had suckled Romulus and Romos [Remus]; ... They did the same to the Sphinxes... It was said that these Aeneadae condemned you [,Helen of Troy,] to the flames as retribution for Troy's having been laid waste by the firebrand because of your scandalous amours. But the gold-madness of these men does not allow me to conceive and utter such a thing, for that madness was the reason why rare and excellent works of art everywhere were given over to total destruction... After all, how could one expect to find among these unlettered barbarians, who are wholly ignorant of their ABCs, the ability to read and knowledge of those epic verses sung of you: Small blame that Trojans and well-grieved Achaeans should for such a woman long time suffer woes; wondrously like is she to the immortal goddesses to look upon²⁵¹.

Note here the involvement of Troy, a place of origin of the first Romans in history; that is why the "New Rome... on special occasions, and even simultaneously, [it] could also be celebrated as New Jerusalem or New Athens, or even New Troy"²⁵². The visit of the Roman Ottoman Basileus Sultan Fatih Mehmed to Troy can only be comprehended within the internal history of the Helleno-Trojan-Roman-Turkish reality, i.e., of Romanity.

Thus by the end of the Carolingian enterprise, Romanity and its syzygy, Hellenity, were exterminated; as Chrétien de Troyes (1135?-1185? AD) writes:

²⁵¹ Niketas Choniates 1984, 358-361.

²⁵² Ousterhout 2018, 12. For an important treatment of the relation of Troy with Rome, see Bassett 2004.

Our books have informed us that the preeminence in chivalry and learning once belonged to Greece. Then chivalry passed to Rome together with that highest learning which now has come to France. God grant that it may be cherished here, that the honour which has taken refuge with us may never depart from France. *God has awarded it as another's share, but of Greeks and Romans no more is heard; their fame is passed and their glowing ash is dead*²⁵³.

Taking place almost five centuries after the Carolingian genesis, the Fall of Constantinople to the Frankish Catholic Crusaders in 1204 AD was an event of unspeakable brutality, committed atrocities and long-term looting, all in Christ's Name and with Papal blessings. Even Gibbon, a historian known for his allergy to all things Christian, writes:

In the mean while the desolated [churches of Roman Constantinople] were profaned by the licentiousness and party zeal of the Latins. After stripping the gems and pearls, they converted the chalices into drinking-cups; their tables, on which they gamed and feasted, were covered with the pictures of Christ and the saints; and they trampled under foot the most venerable objects of Christian worship. In the Cathedral of St Sophia the ample veil of the sanctuary was rent asunder for the sake of the golden fringe; and the altar, a monument of art and riches, was broken in pieces and shared among the captors. Their mules and horses were laden with the wrought silver and gilt carvings which they tore down from the doors and pulpit; And if the beasts stumbled under the burden, they were stabbed by their impatient drivers, and the holy pavement streamed with their impure blood. A prostitute was seated on the throne of the patriarch; and the daughter of Belial, as she is styled, sang and danced in the church to ridicule the hymns and processions of the Orientals²⁵⁴.

Or, in another fashion:

The table of sacrifice, fashioned from every kind of precious material and fused by fire into one whole - blended together into a perfection of one multicolored thing of beauty, truly extraordinary and admired by all nations - was broken into pieces and divided among the despoilers...²⁵⁵.

If we combine the following:

...in Choniates' account of the conquest of Constantinople – simultaneously the New Jerusalem and the New Rome – destruction comes about both

²⁵³ Quoted in Moore 2000, 4, emphasis ours.

²⁵⁴ Gibbon 1827, 780-781.

²⁵⁵ Niketas Choniates 1984, 315.

because of the corruption of the city (the New Jerusalem which fails to be Zion) and the wickedness of the Crusaders (the sons of Aeneas who are yet no true heirs of Rome)²⁵⁶...

and that,

...but because these [statues] too were bronze, and they were short of coins, they threw them into the furnace, selling out even those venerable monuments of *their own people's* culture²⁵⁷...

We can see that Nicetas is unaware of the nature of the Carolingian Frankish West as Moore aptly describes it. How could he? It will take another century for the domestication of Frankish Augustinian theology in the Roman Empire and its Capital, Constantinople.

The 14th Century: Romans, Roman Ottomans, Franks, and Frankishising Romans

While all this was taking place in the Western front of the Roman Empire (*Rūm-eli* (the land of the Romans)/Balkans) in the Eastern one (*Diyār-i Rūm* (the country of the Romans)/Anatolia/Asia Minor) we see the Roman Seljuks of Iconium/Konya as a key power. Consider the reign of the Roman Seljuk Sultan, Kaykhusraw I (r. 1192-1196 AD and 1205-1211 AD):

At Lampe he appointed officials to register the captives, *asking each one his native city and his name*; he asked who his captor was, whether he had lost any of his substance, and whether a son or daughter or spouse had been concealed by the Turks. *Completing the survey, he returned everything to the Romans, grouped according to class and kinship, and continued on his way.* The throng of those taken into slavery was numbered at five thousand persons. *The barbarian took pains that the captives should not lack the necessities of life, and providing them with bread, he did not ignore the pernicious cold of the season [winter 1198- 99]; taking up a two-edged axe, he himself split into billets an old tree nearby which had fallen long ago. To those Turks who came running to see the spectacle, he suggested that they do likewise, explaining the reason for the labor and adding, moreover, that it was for their own good.* The Turks were permitted to leave the camp at any time to cut wood, for there was no one to deter them, but the captive Romans were not allowed to do so, being kept under guard so that they would not think of escaping and thus avoid being put in chains as suspect runaways. *When the Turk came to Philomilion with his horde of captives, he*

²⁵⁶ Saxey 2009:142-143.

²⁵⁷ Nicetas Choniates (in Papamastorakis 2009, 215).

assigned them to unwallled villages and apportioned fertile lands for cultivation; he then provided grain and seed for the sowing of crops. Indeed, he filled them with high hopes, assuring them that once he and the emperor were reconciled and had renewed the former treaties, their reward would be their return home. Should the emperor decide on another course of action, they would remain tribute-free for five whole years, relieved of all tax collectors; afterwards, he would impose upon them a light tax which would never exceed the limit, as is customary among the Romans, nor would it be increased many times. Giving orders to this effect, he returned to Ikonion. His humane pronouncement had two effects: it did not permit any of the captives to remember their homeland and it also attracted to Philomilion many who had not fallen into the Turks' hands but who had heard of what the Turk had done for their kinsmen and countrymen. Thus it was that among the Romans of our generation, the love of many waxed cold, not because the godly man had failed²⁵⁸ and the verities had diminished²⁵⁹ but because iniquity abounded. As a result, they preferred to settle among the barbarians rather than in the Hellenic cities and gladly quit their homelands. The frequent tyrannies frustrated prudent conduct on the part of the people, and the majority, stripped bare by the rapine, took no thought of behaving with moderation towards their fellow countrymen²⁶⁰.

Even in a highly propagandist work of Greek nationalism written in 1922, we find the following evaluation concerning the late 'Byzantine' period:

Numerous Hellenes such as Apelates, Anatolians, Thracians lead the Seljuk Armies. Princes, Dukes, Generals, Constantinopolitans, Pontus Hellenes, Thracians, Macedonians, Peloponnesians, Athenians, participated in the struggle to punish Constantinople for the attempted massacres against them²⁶¹.

In reality, more often than not, the Roman Christian populations of Anatolia were fleeing spiritual and material Frankish and Frankish-led de-Romanising Byzantine, largely Palaiologan, oppression. There is a document which relates to either the time of Patriarch Michael III Anchialus (o. 1170-1178) or that of Michael VI Palaeologus (the heretical Council of Lyon, 1274) and which shows the Patriarch expressing himself in relation to the possibility of an inescapable conquest of the Roman empire by either the

²⁵⁸ See Psalm 11:2.

²⁵⁹ See Matthew 24:12.

²⁶⁰ Niketas Choniates 1984, 272-273, emphasis ours.

²⁶¹ Skalieris 1922, 330.

Catholic Franks or the Muslims of Anatolia. In a Roman and theologically sound manner, he states:

Let the Muslim be my master in outward things rather than the Latin dominate me in matters of the spirit, for, if I am subject to the Muslim, at least, he will not force me to share his faith. But, if *I have to* be under Frankish rule and united with the Roman [Latin] church, I may have to separate myself from God²⁶².

The terms 'union', 'unionists', 'anti-unionists', and the like, used to describe anti-Christian Frankish and Palaiologan activities in Lyon, and later Ferrara-Florence (1438-1445 AD), are so venomously underhanded that they conceal the fact that what they benevolently describe is for the living vine to be subjected to the dead, unrepenting branch destined for the aeonian furnace; the olive orchard to be contaminated by union: for both union and separation can equally turn emancipatory or destructive.

In my work, *Weaving the Unweavable: On First Encounters with the 'Byzantine'-Ottoman Continuum of Ecumenical Romanity: The Saint Gregory Palamas-Chionai Dialogue*, I have provided an analysis of the dialogue of the great Roman Saint with the theologians of the Ottoman Emir, Orhan (r. 1326–1360), the Chionai in Prousa/Bursa in 1354/1355, arguing that what took place theologically – both the similarities, the differences and the attitudes – makes sense as it was enacted upon the wide theophilosophical commensurability between Roman Orthodox Christianity and Seljuk/Ottoman *vahdet-i vücud* Islam, which indeed constitutes the substratum of the 'Byzantine'-Ottoman Continuum of Ecumenical Romanity; and that the Chionai were ex-Christian converts. In this light, Father Romanides' opinion on the matter is right and prudent:

Palamas finally came to realise about the inescapability of the fall of even of the remaining tiny part of the Empire to the Turks; he saw in this conquest, on the one hand, a means of punishment of the Christian people for their sins, and on the other hand, an opportunity for the proselytisation [of the Ottomans] to Christianity²⁶³.

Unfortunately, Father John Romanides remained unaware of the dogmatic and historical reality of *vahdet-i vücud tasavvufi* Islam that Saint

²⁶² Angold 2000, 111, quoting Laurent, (V.), Darrouzès (J.) eds., Dossier Grec de l'Union de Lyon (1273-1277) (Archives De L'orient Chretien), Paris, 1975, text: 367. 6-8, emphasis ours.

²⁶³ Father John Romanides 1991, 42.

Gregory Palamas had encountered it. Without doubt, he would theologically have delved into it.

Indicatively, we mention that it was only three decades after the Saint Gregory-Chionai dialogue and seven decades before its conquest by the Ottomans:

During the 1380s Kydones observed that many people in Constantinople openly declared their preference for Ottoman rule and made fun of their compatriots who wished to live freely under [then Frankishised] Byzantine rule rather than submit to slavery under the Turks. In contrast, those who preferred the Ottomans perceived submitting to the enemy as freedom²⁶⁴.

Demetrius Kydones belonged to a new cast that emerged in a period when the Roman Empire was basically under political-military Frankish guardianship. These newly emerged ‘intellectuals’ served as a conduit for translations of key theologians of Frankish Catholicism such Augustine of Hippo²⁶⁵, Thomas Aquinas²⁶⁶ and William of Anselm²⁶⁷. They ranged from unconditional *Frankophrones* (Frankish/‘Latin’-minded) such as Demetrius Kydones to more hybrid versions like his brother, Prochorus Kydones (1300–1369) (in the end, equally anti-Roman-Christians). Others include the Augustinian Varlaam the Calabrian (ca. 1290–1348 AD), Nikephoros Gregoras (1295–1360 AD), Gregory Akindynos (ca. 1300–1348 AD), Manuel Chrysoloras (c. 1355–1415 AD), Gemistus Pletho (c. 1355–1452/1454 AD), to name a few. They were, in one way or another, involved in ‘the Varlaamist Controversy’ – laughably known as ‘the Hesychast Controversy’ (as if it could be the ‘Christian Controversy’ as such in Christianity!!!) – which ended in the mid-14th century with the contemplation of the Frankish Augustinian doctrines of Varlaam the Calabrian by a series of five Christian Synods.

²⁶⁴ Necipoğlu 2009, 146, quoting from “Kydones–Loenertz, vol. ii, no. 320, lines 10–14 (1383–4), in R.- J. Loenertz ed., *D’em’etrius Cydon’es Correspondance*, 2 vols., Vatican City, 1956–1960.

²⁶⁵ The first to translate Augustine’s works in the late ‘Byzantine’ period was Maximus Planudes (c. 1260–c. 1305 AD) who in 1280 undertook the project of rendering Augustine’s *De Trinitate* into Greek for the first time.

²⁶⁶ For the introduction of the works of Thomas Aquinas into the Roman Constantinople in which Demetrios and Prochoros Kydones were instrumental, see, for example, Demetracopoulos 2010, 829–884.

²⁶⁷ Anselm of Canterbury (1033–1109)’s *Cur Deus homo* (1095–1098 AD) was translated into Greek by Demetrius Kydones’ pupil and Frankish Catholic convert, Manuel Kalekas (*ob.* 1410).

The characteristic of the [Frankish-]Latin theological method that Varlaam represents is the naïve identification of reality with intellections/meanings synthetically arranged according to: 1) exoteric dogmatic forms from the Biblical and Patristic tradition which nonetheless lack an initial empirical [lived-out] foundation, and 2) the metaphysics, logic and morals, mainly, of Platonist and Aristotelians which too, in the Frankish tradition, lack an initial foundation. Thus, the Holy Scriptures, the Fathers, Plato and Aristotle were distorted according with phantasies about religion and authority that the conquerors of Western Romanity held²⁶⁸.

With the prevalence of Roman Christianity in Constantinople after 1351, Emperor John V Paleologos (1332-1391 AD), on the one hand, overtly adopted a more conciliatory approach towards the Roman Orthodox Church, avoiding a direct confrontation but, on the other hand, he continued his pro-Frankish ecclesiastical activities rather covertly. As Gibbon describes the Palaiologian stance:

...of all the Byzantine princes, that pupil, John Palaeologus [V, under the influence his fervent Catholic mother, Anna of Savoy (regent 1341-47 AD)], was best disposed to embrace, to believe, and obey the shepherd of the West [the Pope]. ... Palaeologus engages to impose on his clergy the same [Frankish Catholic] spiritual yoke; but as the resistance of the Hellenes [(i.e. Roman Orthodox Christians)] might justly (have) foreseen, he adopts the two effectual methods of corruption [by distributing the vacant religious positions to ecclesiastics subscribing to the Catholic creed] and education [by opening three schools for teaching the Roman youth the doctrine and language of the Frankish Catholics]²⁶⁹.

In the end, Emperor John V Paleologos gave his confession of faith in front the Pope in October of 1369²⁷⁰, forfeiting his Romanity even officially and with the Frankishised pro-Thomist Byzantine, Demetrius Kydones at his side, who himself had converted to Catholicism.

A point of clarification is needed here. Modern *Frankophone* academia sees in these 'Byzantine intellectuals' a relation with ancient Greek philosophy and culture – a view that is coupled with modern Frankish-inspired Greek nationalism – as being antithetical to the Roman Christian camp. This is a false view; for in line with the Hellenistic aura of the era and in the theological disputes of the mid-14th century both the Roman Christian party, as well as the Frankish-minded 'intellectuals', resorted to the intellectual devices of ancient Greek philosophy. In the case of the former,

²⁶⁸ Father John Romanides 1991, 7.

²⁶⁹ Gibbon 1827, 803.

²⁷⁰ Savvides (in Savvides and Nicoloudis 2007, 277).

this had been done since time ‘immemorial’ (not to forget that the Franks themselves had impudently called them ‘Greek theologians’ or ‘Greek Orthodox’ since the Carolingian era), organically yet not in an assimilating synthesis in the sense that it was - through early Judaism and ancient Graeco-Roman philosophies, indeed, in their stagnation and entrapped in the Created - that Christianity moved humanity from the place of human super into the theandric Realm of *Supraness* in the Lord Jesus Christ – for in the late ‘Byzantine’ era, they were usually pro-Aristotelian, such as Saint Gregory Palamas himself. The lamentations of Nicetas Choniates for the loss of the ancient Greek and Roman past in 1204 AD can be heard within that milieu. Yet Byzantine intellectuals, in the degree that they consciously or unconsciously conformed to Catholic thought, were distortedly subduing Greek philosophy into categories of thought foreign to its practice and in line with pseudo-Platonic (not Platonic) Augustinian anthropology – re-entrapping for that matter humanity into the ontology of the Cosmos. It is not accidental that not many centuries later their virtues had been exterminated from the West. The theme of Bradshaw’s superb book, *Aristotle East and West: Metaphysics and the Division of Christianity*, is an excellent source for that matter. Thus, we can see even from that early time that the modern Greek nationalism which sees those same intellectuals as its progenitors is not religiously neutral but in bed with Frankish religious entities whether they are Catholic, Protestant and/or neo-Gnostic, religious or secular in appearance; it is as anti-Hellenic as it is essentially anti-Christian. Furthermore, none of the relevant theologians-historians have been aware of the nature of early Ottoman Islam and the theophilosophical commensurability between Roman Orthodox Christianity and Seljuk/Ottoman *vahdet-i vücud* Islam (Sunni and Alevi) in particular. This is a huge handicap in regard to theological and historical analysis, as well as interpretation and explanation of events of that time.

The threats Romanity faced in the mid-14th century were as serious as they were multiple, both external and internal, and as non-Christian as they were Christianity-related. Yet there emerged a combination of internal and external peril that threatened to practically wipe ecumenical Romanity - indeed ecumenical humanity as such for that matter - off the face of the earth. Romanity and Human Ecumenicity were fighting for survival. To understand what this meant one should keep in mind that for a Roman worthy of the name it first and foremost pertained to the hierarchical inter-encapsulation between, on the one hand, the Christian faith and its underlying precepts, which had been preserved unadulterated since the time of Christ in the ancient Roman Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church, and, on the other, the political-military-social realities of each epoch, i.e. in

a kind of dynamic, mutual, co-supportive, differentiated unity – in line with the dogmatics of Roman Orthodox Christianity on the differentiated unity of (spirit-intellect)-(body)²⁷¹.

The overall picture emerging in the 14th century is that, on the one hand, the Roman State under the Palaiologan dynasty was treading all the more along Frankish paths in an act of de-Romanising betrayal, i.e., it was becoming the 'Byzantium' of the Franks, separating itself from the Roman people one by one under increasingly direct Frankish imperialism, while, on the other hand, the Roman Catholic Orthodox Apostolic Church was safeguarding with the Roman people, Roman Ecumenicity, and progressively assuming certain state functions, 'coinciding' all the more with the Romanising Ottoman religio-state reality of Roman Orthodox Christianity and Seljuk/Ottoman *vahdet-i vücud* Islam.

As Father John Meyendorff writes in his article *Society and Culture in the Fourteenth Century: Religious Problems*:

The empire had practically ceased to exist. But the Church was keeping its influence on the people – in Constantinople, in much of Western Europe and the remaining imperial territories, and also in occupied Asia Minor²⁷².

Thus, it is safe to claim that Fatih Sultan Mehmed's bestowal of canon law to the Roman *Ecclesia* was a confirmation and further development of already preexisting actualities.

In reality, the process that the Franks and their local *Francophone* clients, consciously or unconsciously, tried to enact was a replica of the Fall of Orthodox Christian Western Europe to the Carolingian Augustinian Franks (Western academic imperialism enacts a similar process along with its Protestant dimension, and its outcome of secularisation on occupied countries): a reclusive and secluded Frankish Augustinian feudal elite as vassals of the Franks, *in separation* from the would-be enslaved Roman people, now, of the East. In Western Europe, the Carolingian 'project' had been successful, particularly in the extermination of Christianity in Western Europe and its replacement with Augustinian Catholicism as there existed no worldly political authority that would become in-syzygy with the Roman Orthodox Popes and the Western Roman Christians. Which is the reason the latter resorted to fabrications such as the forged *Decretals* of Constantine in a last effort to save themselves from the Frankish menace. Yet in the East

²⁷¹ For a glimpse of how this hierarchical inter-encapsulation lay at the centre of Roman ('Byzantine') foreign policy, see, for example, Harris, Jonathan. *Byzantium and the Crusades*. London: Hambledon Continuum, 2006.

²⁷² Father John Meyendorff 1971 (in Meyendorff 1982, 133).

such a power would wedge itself between Frankish plans and the Roman Orthodox Catholic *Ecclesia*, sheltering and saving Christianity from extinction: Roman Ottomans. The more the Frankishising Palaiologan State separated itself from the *Ecclesia* of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Roman Greek people the more state functions were assumed by the *Ecclesia* in parallel, complementary with those of the Ottomans State. And although God rewarded the Roman *Ecclesia* and His people for their fidelity, there was, at the same time, a punishment, a price to pay for their overall past infidelity to Romanity: partial Islamisation... As for the apostasy of the late ‘Byzantine’, politically Frankisised elite, the verdict was historical extermination; remember? The Divine Will according to His receding allowance...

As the holy Elder Athanasios Mytilinaios (1927-2006 AD) states in his Homily X on the Reigns 4/Melakhim/The Second book of Kings:

I will never forget what that philosopher who ended up as idolater, [Plethon Gemistos] of the Byzantine Middle Ages, in the Peloponnese, at Mystra, had once said: “Indeed, a day will come that Hellas will return once again to idolatry”. Horror!!!!... Of course, neither Christianity nor the *Ecclesia* is lost; simply, it will abandon Hellas; a terrible loss and a terrible shame for us [Hellenes]. Let it be though!!! For neither the *Ecclesia* of Christ nor Orthodoxy is lost. *If it was conjoint with Hellenism, it does not mean that it will perish together with Hellenism.* For, all in all, Hellenism is a form/schema/appearance of this world while the *Ecclesia* of God is an aeonian reality co-aeonian and co-existing with God for it has its root in the very Holy Trinity, in the Holy Triadic God; it is the *Ecclesia* of the Three Persons/Faces of the Holy Trinity, i.e., the Communion of the Three Persons/Faces of the Holy Trinity. The *Ecclesia* cannot be lost for “My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”²⁷³ Yet, Woe and Thrice Woe to us Hellenes!!!²⁷⁴

The Holy Elder was clearly able to see what would happen in Greece in forty years’ time.

The Divine Will and History: Pray Unceasingly in True Humbleness and Patience – or else, no True Knowledge

“[Saint Dionysius the Aeropagitis] called darkness the complete incomprehensibility”²⁷⁵ of God, an inaccessible reality that pertains to the

²⁷³ The Lord Jesus Christ (in Matthew 16:18).

²⁷⁴ Elder Father Archimandrite Athanasios Mytilinaios (Lesson 10, 4 Reigns 10:29-36 and 11:1-19, May 28, 1980). Accessed June 15, 2023.

²⁷⁵ Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 4:417B.

Divine Essence, as did Saint Maximus the Confessor, The God-Seer, Saint Gregory the Theologian (c. 329-390 AD), tells us in his Oration 28:

Paul too attempts to approach – I do not say the Nature of God, for this is utterly impossible – but only the judgements (*κρίματα*) of God. And because he does not find a way out of nor an end/*telos* in his ascendance, neither the curiosity of the [spiritual] intellect finds a clear end since it always seems to be something in want – Oh! What a miracle/paradox!²⁷⁶.

And, on the matter of the Divine Essence, Saint Basil the Great, another of the Cappadocian Fathers, ((330-379 AD), confirms:

...thus, in itself, the knowledge of the divine nature is the perception of its incomprehensibility; [thus, the exegetically] venerable is not the comprehension of what the divine Nature is but [only] that the divine Nature is²⁷⁷.

In another instance:

But the energies are multiple/differentiated, yet the essence is simple/unitary. As for us, we say that we know our God from the energies; while we do not testify that we near His essence as such. For His energies descend to us, yet His essence remains unapproachable²⁷⁸.

Which is exactly why Saint Maximus the Confessor says,

God is known only partially by way of His energies/operations. Yet, the knowledge of Him with regard to essence and hypostasis is equally inaccessible to both angels and humans and cannot be attained by anyone, not even in the least²⁷⁹.

And not only the divine Essence but the essence of creatures in, of, and by themselves. For the supposed -'neo-Platonist' of Westerner imagination, Saint Gregory of Nyssa tells us that not only the divine Nature in Itself is unknowable but also our own nature, indeed the natures of every existent:

It is for this that when someone examines every voice/name inspired by God, we find nothing about/of the divine Nature nor about/of the essence of anything that exists²⁸⁰.

²⁷⁶ Saint Gregory the Theologian, PG 36:53C.

²⁷⁷ Saint Basil the Great, PG 32:86C.

²⁷⁸ Saint Basil the Great, PG 32:869AB.

²⁷⁹ Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 90:1160CD.

²⁸⁰ Saint Gregory of Nyssa, PG 45:945D.

O! God-Seer, Saint Kallistos Katafygiotis (14th century AD):

O *Supra*-Praised and *Supra*-Honourable Monad, Bottomless Depth of Power and Wisdom; Who it is that from this beginning, or starting-line (let one call it as one wishes), You lead the *nous* that has been cleansed accordingly into the most holy Darkness, carrying it from Glory to Glory, while many times You have it reside in the *supra*-illuminous Darkness. I do not know – that which Yourself knows – whether this [Darkness] is the same One into which Moses entered in the old times, or (whether) this is the image of the latter or the latter is the image of this; yet it definitely is clearly Noetic Darkness and that within this secret place of the soul takes place the mysteries of spiritual union and love in a divine, *supra*-natural and ineffable way – and this is something that those who have entered It by the Radiance of the Holy Spirit clearly know²⁸¹.

Now let us return to Saint Gregory the Theologian's Oration 28. As the *nous* ascends in amazement,

...he describes the situation in amazement and calls it, the riches and the depths²⁸² of God and confesses the ungraspability/incomprehensiveness of God's judgements/ energies/ operations (*κρίματα*) and uses almost the same words as David does who sometimes calls the judgements/ energies/ operations of God the great deep²⁸³ the foundation/the bottom of which no human being can reach/grasp/receive (*λαβεῖν*) by way of measure or sense, and, some other times he says such knowledge is too wonderful for him and his composition, and, that it is too high that he cannot attain unto it^{284, 285}

What are these “judgements” (*κρίματα*) that Saint Gregory the Theologian talks about as the only conduits for accessibility to God, which, in this respect, are necessarily identical with God's ‘outer nature’ – to use Saint Gregory's terminology? In his Oration 41, Saint Gregory the Theologian writes: “for I think Isaiah loves to call the judgements/energies/operations (*κρίματα*) of the Spirit, Spirits”²⁸⁶ (PG 36, 431C)²⁸⁷. In his, *Εὐχαριστία πρὸς Θεόν Β*’ (Giving Thanks to God II), another God-Seer, Saint Symeon the New

²⁸¹ Saint Kallistos Katafygiotis, PG 147:940D-941A.

²⁸² ‘this grace was given to me ... the unsearchable riches of Christ’ (Ephesians 3:8) and Romans 11:33.

²⁸³ Psalms 36:6/35:7.

²⁸⁴ Psalm 138/139:6.

²⁸⁵ Saint Gregory the Theologian, PG 36:53C.

²⁸⁶ Saint Gregory the Theologian, PG 36:431C.

²⁸⁷ For the same usage of the relevant verb, *κρίνω* (lit. to judge) as “to be busy/active with something” by Saint Gregory the Theologian, see his Oration 27, 3:22-23, PG 36:16A (28)-(29).

Theologian, describes the manner that he was taken up above the cesspit and the fake honour of this world and his release/redemption, “ἀρρήτοις σου κρίμασιν”²⁸⁸ (“by way of Your ineffable judgments/energies/operations”) for this was not done by an angel or a human being but “by You Yourself ... Who stretched Your Undeified Hand ... and grabbed me...”²⁸⁹.

And its highest ontological form, the Paulian ἀνακρίνω²⁹⁰, is incomparably more than anything ‘to examine’ but ontologically relates to a caught up/taking upwards towards the Highest (ἀνά) by way of the uncreated Divine Energies (κρίσις (*krisis*) and its κρίματα (*krímata*)), a dwelling in True Being in Christ. And, fundamentally, this Ever-Daylight Cosmos has nothing to do with this admixed world of ours: “I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me”²⁹¹. Thus:

Thy steadfast love, O LORD, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reaches the clouds. Thy righteousness is like great mountains ; thy judgements are a great deep.... For with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light we see light²⁹².

His *Light* (ἡγία), HIS *Steadfast Love* (ἡσυχία), HIS *Tender Mercy(ies)* (ἡἐλεος) *Grace* (ἡχάρη), *Glory* (Δόξα) *Love* (Ἀγάπη), HIS *Light* (Φῶς) and HIS *Mercy* (Ἔλεος): all uncreated and interchangeable.

The Wills of God are incomprehensible; His Ways labyrinthine; His Judgments Unsearchable.

Remember how in the beginning of our discussion we talked about the One Will of God in Three ontological manifestations? That is: His Will according to His satisfactory approval (*eὐδοκία/eudokia*), the Will according to the divine *oikonomia*[(*οἰκονομία*)] (God's actualized plan for the salvation of humankind), and the Will according to His receding allowance (*παράχωρησις/parachorisis*) towards eternal damnation. If the Roman people had remained faithful to Christianity, the whole of the Roman Empire would have remained unshakable, of course within the tribulation of this this never-to-be-accomplished world— something according with His satisfactory approval; now that they had partially fallen but repented at large, His Will according to the divine *oikonomia* was expressed through the Ottoman reality at a partial price (Islamisation); as the Will according to His receding allowance (*παράχωρησις/parachorisis*) towards eternal

²⁸⁸ Saint Symeon the New Theologian 1983, 570-1.

²⁸⁹ Saint Symeon the Theologian 1983, 570-573.

²⁹⁰ 1 Corinthians 2:14-15.

²⁹¹ John 14:30.

²⁹² Tehillim/Psalms 36:6-7; 10.

damnation that He deserved the ever unrepented apostates of Christianity and Romanity. This is the overall scheme God holds for the centuries, adapted according to the realities of each epoch, until the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Being the apogee of Islam, the Koranic *vahdet-i vücud* Islam is the result of the divine Will in *oikonomia* and the historical internalisation of Islam in the Roman Rumelia and Anatolia. Above all, it legitimately existed for the sake of the possibility of safeguarding as well as being a springboard for the return to the divine Will according to the satisfactory approval (*εὐδοκία/eudokia*), which only Roman Christianity doctrinally belongs to; or as an *oikonomia* punishment for the sins of the Orthodox Christian. That is why whenever it failed in either of these pursuits, it lost its *oikonomia* status as a whole and fell to its rightful place in absolute terms, the Will according to His receding allowance (*παράχωρησις/parachorisis*).

Islam Exalted: *Vahdet-i Vücud tasavvuf*, the unity-of-Being” Sufism) (Sunni and Alevi) the central Ottoman religiosity until 1750; being a constitutive part of Romanity, it represents the only representative of the *oikonomia* class – yet conditionally. For you are included in the *oikonomia* primarily for the sake of preserving those who dogmatically and actively in-deeds belong to the Realm of the Divine Satisfactory Approval - this protection is valid as long as the latter are sincere (providing that yourself you are true to the *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf*’s living dogmas). It was mostly for this protection that you were granted conditional entrance into Uncreatedness when you preserved Christianity - at a price fit to the partial apostasy of the Christians of the time – saving it from the Paleologian and the Frankish exterminating menace. This is acknowledged from both sides before the 19th century, the time of de-Romanising Westernization and anti-Roman anti-Ottoman Islamism: One day, while walking with his disciples, Mevlana Celaleddin [Rumi] came across some [Roman Orthodox] priests dressed in their black clothes. Some of them said about the priests, ‘How dark are these people?’ To which Rumi replied: ‘There is no one more generous than they. In this world, they gave us Islam (*Müslümanlık*), purity (*temizlik*) and worship (*ibadet*), while in the next world too, they bestowed on us the houris and the pavilions [of paradise]. What more do you want?’²⁹³. The extremely popular and influential martyred monk of the late 18th century, Cosmas the Aetolian (1714 – 1774 AD) taught that God had chosen to give the Roman Empire to ‘the Turk’ whom ‘He brought ... from inside the Red Apple’, since ‘God knew that the alternative Royal houses damage our faith and that the Turk does not... And it was because God did not want us to sin that he gave [the

²⁹³ Eflaaki in Atasagun 2001, 136 (trans. by author). Eflaaki was a 14th-century Sufi historian who collected literature by and about Rumi and his disciples.

Empire] to the Turk so like a guardian dog he would guard over us²⁹⁴. In both Roman Christianity ('Byzantines') and Roman Islam (pre-mid-18th c. Ottomans), the Red Apple ideal represented Love itself, and/or ecumenical political dominion²⁹⁵. The Roman Christian and probably Bektaşî²⁹⁶ Greek revolutionary Rigas Velestinlis (1757-1798 AD) wrote that the Ottoman Empire, which was once in his days 'the most beautiful Kingdom in the World, praised by the wise men/women all over the world'²⁹⁷ had ended up a tyranny from which: 'both Christians and Turks, without any discrimination *vis-à-vis* religion (as they are all created by God and are the children of Adam)'²⁹⁸, must save themselves. It was a time when the official Ottoman state cannot be classified even in the *oikonomia* class; a move from Rumelian-Anatolian *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* to the *vahdet-i şühûd* (unity of appearance) of India at the time (Pakistan today). The full restoration to *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* came back with modern Turkey's establishment (1923-1938) by a *Pir*, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Thus, at its best, *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* pertains to a conditional *oikonomia*, and certainly not to *eudokia*, for it consciously rejects the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ [more, precisely the Theanthropicity of the Lord Jesus Christ] - as the whole of Islam does. *And in this [dimension]*, it is not of God, but of the devil²⁹⁹.

In that time the ontological transformation of the Anatolian Turks was not set to take place towards Arab Islam but towards Roman Orthodox Christianity – which was a divine salvific *oikonomia* towards the Turkish populations. Which is why in the religiopolitical womb that gave birth to the Ottoman state, this was said about three Roman Seljuks of Iconium/Konya:

...at least three Anatolian Seljuk sultans [...] had dual Christian and Muslim identities, an identity which was further complicated by a dual Turkic/Persian and Greek ethnic identity. [...] The same may be said of Kaykhusraw II's son Rukn al-Dīn Qılıç Arslan IV [(r. 1260–1265)], as well as 'Alā al-Dīn Kayqubād II whose identity included Turkish/Persian Muslim and Christian Georgian [Orthodox] elements.³⁰⁰

Thus we return to Pope Benedict's *Lecture* and his invocation of the arguments of Manuel II Palaeologus, a rare exception among the members

²⁹⁴ Cosmas the Aetolean's *Didahes*, quoted in Metallinos 1998, 259-260. In general, the 'other Royal houses' imply a Frankish ('Latin') rule.

²⁹⁵ Interestingly, as we will see, the *Kızıl Elma* ideal existed both in official Ottoman ideology and especially in Bektaşî/Alevî poetry.

²⁹⁶ Hasluck 1929, 595.

²⁹⁷ Rigas (in Metallinos 1998, 265).

²⁹⁸ Rigas (in Metallinos 1998, 264).

²⁹⁹ Retoulas 2022, 158-160, emphasis ours.

³⁰⁰ Shukurov 2012, 133–134.

of the generally de-Romanised Palaiologan dynasty who more often than not denounced their Romanity in favour of Frankish Catholicism of some sort - for demonstrating the intrinsic doctrinal relation of Roman Christianity to the *Logos* was an aptly warranted choice. Yet, the choice of its Islamic counterpart, the 'worthy Persian *mouterizes*' who converses with Manuel was an unfortunate one – yet understandably so. For, the *mouterizes* was not Persian but Turkish – and as we will see, a great Roman Muslim at that!

In the intellectual climate of the period, the Roman Christians usually styled themselves as Hellenes and the various Anatolian Muslims as *Achaimenidae*, the archaic term for Persians. Yet, contrary to the adherents of the Carolingian worldview, who used the term freely, their usage of the term Hellene was confined only within certain contexts, typically history, politics and ancient philosophy, but never in connection to their own Christianity. In reality, as we will see, Emperor Manuel II's interlocutor was a prominent representative of the formative phenomenon of Roman Islam, which took place first, in *Diyar-ı Rum* ('the country of the Romans') and later *Rum(-)eli* ('the land of the Romans') as Anatolia and the Balkans were respectively called by their Muslim inhabitants of the time. This phenomenon was not based on a Manichaean struggle relating to contemplative reason or naked political instrumentality. Without denying their inescapable presence yet being baptised in the river of a specific lived-out 'conception' of love, it was essentially the drawing of commensurable Christiano-Islamic paths of the Human to the Divine and vice versa. Yet it pertained to neither homogenising identification nor eclectic syncretism, but to a differentiatedly unifying inter-encapsulation between Christianity and Islam in Roman Rumelia and Anatolia.

As the living face of Rumelian/Anatolian Islam leant towards Roman Orthodox Christianity, in the same way, that living face of Roman Orthodox Christians leant towards its conditional *oikonomia* fall (one ontological step downwards (partially on the occasion that it fell) was set by God not towards its supposedly 'Christian' fellows, i.e., Frankish Augustinianism (Catholicism, Protestantism) (for that would have doctrinally constituted a life in the Will according to His receding allowance (*παράχωρησις/parachorisis*)) but towards Seljuk/Ottoman *vahdet-i vücud* Islam where the Will of *oikonomia* could still be operational. That is why phenomena relating even to Frankish modernity, i.e., both unconditional Westernisation, Orthodoxism, and Islamism are unnatural and destructive for both Hellenes and Turks, and Romanity in general.

Of course, only God knows exactly what is precisely applicable, suitable for and applied in every age, epoch, society, person, etc.

As,

...(it is) for the multi-national conglomerate of Gnosticism with its multiple horns, which is dominant all over the world today: Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world³⁰¹.

And this was said in the 1st century AD...

From before Christ, through the Pharisees, and into the New Age:

Οὗτοι εἰσιν οἱ ἀποδιορίζοντες, ψυχικοί, Πνεῦμα μὴ ἔχοντες, These are the ones who remove the boundaries; they are of the human soul (*psychikoi*), not having the Spirit³⁰². The ones operating merely by the soul's energy and powers, i.e., by the human spirit and intellect but without the Holy Spirit's uncreated energy are not of the Spirit (not spiritual ones), and thus, ultimately dividers. It is clear from the word of the Apostles that Gnostic-like doctrines had been, were, and will be the key concern for the Christians from First Eschaton (Paradise), *via* the Second Eschaton (Incarnation), to the Last Eschaton – even if: Scholars have been remarkably reluctant, or, rather unwilling to allow that Gnostic tendencies may have developed in the very midst of Palestinian Judaism itself. But there exists a whole remarkable chain of Hebrew and Aramaic texts, known as the *Hekhaloth Books* and preserved, not on the outer fringes of Judaism, but in circles highly conscious of their attachment to Pharisaism which bear witness to the existence of Jewish Gnosticism³⁰³: There are persons who maybe most humanly ethical/morally righteous, who may have even 'deadened' themselves through fasting, etc., and yet possessing a dreadful mindset, a pharisaic one. *Scratch a Pharisee, you will find a Gnostic*. Indeed, even from a doctrinal point of view, Pharisaism was so extreme in, on the one hand, its identification of the religious with mimetic exotericism, and, on the other

³⁰¹ 1 John 4:1-3.

³⁰² Jude 1:19. For the spiritual human being in relation to the bodily (*somatikos*) and soul-based (humanly spiritual-intelligible, *psychikos*) human beings, see 1 Corinthians 2:13-15 and 15:44-46.

³⁰³ The Dutch scholar Gilles Quispel in his 1961 review of the pioneering book of Gershom Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism and Talmudic Tradition* (1960) (Quispel 1961, 117, emphasis ours). In Scholem's words: "But there exists a whole chain of Hebrew and Aramaic texts, preserved, not on the outer fringes of Judaism, but in circles highly conscious of their attachment to rabbinic Judaism". (Scholem 1965, 5).

hand, its focus almost solely upon matter and the externality of gestures³⁰⁴, that innately (maybe unwillingly) set up a Gnostic-like framework by default – as the only human-wise way out of it was an all-out spiritual-religious posture in a ‘mind vs. matter’ framework. But, Uncreatedness is neither a conceivable category by human thought nor a humanly-actualized mode of existence. Mammon’s denarius bears the Gnostic image and the Pharisaic inscription – from the beginning of the delusion to the end of times. These two are cacodoxical kinfolk, two sides of a single coin. You will neither find it in circulation in the Realm of the Divine nor will it secure your passing there. It cannot help you complete your journey for it considers itself completed. Here, it will buy you the flame of fame, but over there, the flame of the living life is eternal pain. And one needs to keep in mind that hatred for the body can proceed from two apparently opposing directions: by way of direct hostility, and of excessive undiscerning loving for it. Take, for example, the neo-Gnostic assault upon the Theanthropic Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, highly propagated by Hollywood³⁰⁵; it does not come by emphasizing His Spiritual nature exclusively but instead, His bodily one³⁰⁶. The proto-image of Ba’al-pe’or (the demon of sexual promiscuity, and undiscerning creativity and innovation) constitutes a prototype Gnostic

³⁰⁴ The resemblance between Pharisaic exoterism and key aspects of the Medieval Frankish culture is uncanny: “During the early Middle ages and even during the feudal era, the faithful could not contemplate coming into contact with the supernatural except by means of gestures which gave them a hold on it, so to speak. ... What was crucial in [the] eyes [of monks and layfolk] was scrupulous observance of the rituals, which were mysteriously effective in themselves. Thus epic poems (*chansons de geste*) frequently depict knights giving one another communion as viaticum in the form of a flower, a blade of grass, or a little earth, when there was no priest to distribute the sacraments. *It is as though the reception of the Saviour's body mattered less than the rite of eating.* (Vauchez 1993, 167, emphasis ours) As a result of the Carolingian *Correctio* and during the post-Carolingian era increased de-Romanisation became the norm: “the role of the laity in the liturgy was utterly passive. The liturgy was completely ritualized and no longer expressed the sentiments of the community of the faithful, especially since the laity could no longer sing the Latin hymns. The value of these rituals strongly resembled that of the Germanic legal tradition: *In the Germanic culture a wrong gesture of imprecise formula could invalidate a legal transaction and change a declaration of not guilty into its opposite.* The value attributed to the ritual of the Mass led to the reading of the Mass with no one present except the one priest doing the reading”. (Bredero 1994, 356, emphasis ours).

³⁰⁵ In later years, Netflix constitutes an epitome of cine-Gnosticism.

³⁰⁶ See the Gnostic-Nietzschean Greek writer, Nikos Kazantzakis’ *The Last Temptation of Jesus Christ*, and, Dan Brown’s Gnostic-myths-based novels (*The Da Vinci Code*, etc.). Hollywood has catapulted both writers to world renown.

image³⁰⁷, a reflection of which is the meta-image of the doctrines of an apostate segment of the Babylonian Jews, mentioned in the Koran³⁰⁸.

The Epistle of Jude reads: Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah³⁰⁹. In the words of the Lord Jesus Christ: But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate^{310, 311}.

Hear the traveller of the Third Heavens:

"O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contractions of what is falsely [named/] called knowledge [*γνώσις*, *gnosis*] – by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. Grace *be* with you. Amen³¹². Not only Gnosis was gnostic, but the catholic authors were gnostic, the neoplatonic too, Reformation was gnostic, Communism was gnostic, Nazism was gnostic, liberalism, existentialism and psychoanalysis were gnostic too, modern biology was gnostic, Blake,

³⁰⁷ Bemidbar/Numbers 22-24, 25:1-3, 31:16; Yehoshua/Joshua 22:17; Tehillim/Psalms 106:28; and, Hoshea 9:10.

³⁰⁸ The Koran seems to identify such an early development in Babylonian Judaism in very unflattering terms... (Koran 2:101-103 (in Haleem 2005, 12-13)). "It is too often and too easily forgotten in these discussions that in speaking of Samaritans we are speaking of heretical Judaism; and once we admit that such a development could take place within the Samaritan variant of Judaism, the possibility of analogous developments within the main branch of Pharisaic or Hasidic Judaism must equally be admitted. In fact, G. Quispel has come to the same conclusion, namely, that the oldest documents of Christian Gnosticism presuppose a Jewish Gnosis in which the figure of the Redeemer has not yet acquired a central place. A similar conclusion was reached earlier by Eric Peterson, who has stressed the existence of such a pre-Christian stratum in Judaism in several of his papers. He has particularly emphasized the point that such a development did not take place in Palestine alone but in Babylonia as well; and that Christian Gnosticism in Babylonia, too, seems to have been preceded by a form of Jewish Gnosticism, one which in this case assimilated Jewish and Persian elements and intertwined the one with the other. Indeed, I think it can be shown by a closer study of the much discussed Mandaean texts (in which the Jewish elements are much stronger than generally supposed) that such a process may well have taken place". (Scholem 1965, 4-5)

³⁰⁹ Jude 1:11.

³¹⁰ The Apocalypse/Unveiling 2:14-15.

³¹¹ Retoulas 2022, 161-163.

³¹² 1 Timothy 6:20-21.

Yeats, Kafka, Rilke, Proust, Joyce, Musil, Hesse and Thomas Mann were gnostic. From very authoritative interpreters of Gnosis, I learned further that science is gnostic and superstition is gnostic; power, counter-power, and lack of power are gnostic; left is gnostic and right is gnostic; Hegel is gnostic and Marx is gnostic; Freud is gnostic and Jung is gnostic; all things and their opposite are equally gnostic³¹³. Indeed, Frankish Augustinianism and its historical actualization in the Western milieus constitute the medieval transformative bridge between ancient Gnosticism and modern Gnosticism. In Plato, the inner world of the Universal Forms that the mind is expected to come to contact in its inner journey is independently existent, shared, and public; this is transformed, *via* the historical Western Augustinian problematic (in Augustine, the inner world reclusively private), into modern Frankish Gnosticism, where the Universals are turned into Conceptions of private individual minds (e.g., in the case of Carl Jung). By overall reflection, the Rumi-mania in Neo-Babylon was not accidental; but the latest attempt to distort Islamic *vahdet-i vücud* via Islamist Protestantizing pseudo-pan-lovism of the *Nūr*-offshoots – mirroring the early 19th-century effort for its attempted subordination to the *vahdet-i şühûd* mysticism. All these attempts of a Frankish modernizing nature. If, at its best, *vahdet-i vücud* Islam is in *oikonomia*, then, at its worst, it is bundled together with the remaining humanly physical and metaphysical religio-ideologies - being totally invisible to the Realm of Uncreatedness (even by their own self-set standards), and thus, they belong to His receding allowance - left to the devices of the physical and metaphysical Cosmos. That is why the Fathers considered all other religious affiliations, strands and trends (even non-Christian ones) under the wholesale term, ‘heresies’ – yet without the murderous ugliness the term has been used by the West historically. Of course, all these lived-out questions are to be entirely answerable to humanity as a whole and to each one of us personally in empirical historical being by the Real Himself with an *autexousiotis*-based human synergic relationship. Remember that after Christ, the struggle is upward; as for living faith, after the 7th Day, it is diminishingly downward - until the ever 8th one. But never forget that: the *archē* of the Good is more powerful than every dissolution [and yet the apostate Manicheans stage and establish an Evil *archē* too as being dominant in the visible Creation]... Thus, as the Supreme Authority of the Good remains undivided (division is the way to dissolution³¹⁴), its undissolving-ness ousts any division. Before this imposition, the Ruler of the Universe preached that what is divided will be dissolved³¹⁵. And for so many centuries since Creation has come into existence, its inheritance is this: integrity rules over dissolution. Moreover,

³¹³ Culianu 1984, 290.

³¹⁴ In Roman Christianity, division and difference are not at all the same thing; difference is a constitutive element of the Good’s Order.

³¹⁵ Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. (Matthew 12:25)

it is clear for all to see that the heavenly and the earthly are in conjunction and continuity with each other. The noeric (intelligible) and noetic (being-in-uncreatedness) are not set apart from the corporeal and the senses, but they clearly mutually touch one another through the perpetual divine providence. And not only this but also the *logos*-based animal, i.e., the human being, comprises both visible and invisible parts³¹⁶.³¹⁷

From a salvific point of view, the Old Testament contained a history largely based on linear time of a life going towards a Peak, i.e., the coming of the Messiah, the Whole Creation was moving towards *Anastasis* (a stasis *supra*, above/Resurrection) partially; after the Lord Jesus Christ while the possibility of a life-*Supra* is an ontological reality, faith-wise the whole Creation moves towards Apostasy, which as we have seen, means losing, standing away from, rejecting ontological *Stasis* (στάσις, standing still, stillness, *standing stone*). That is why the Lord says:

"Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"³¹⁸.

And that is why the eternity of *Supraness*, i.e., Christianity is not subject to innovations but only clarifications in time, person, etc. for the ontological confirmation of that eternity. For that matter, Islam cannot be the Seal of Witness but only a witness of the already accomplished ontological re-opening of the Gate to Paradise: via the Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As we have seen elsewhere,

The Gnostic-Augustinian ouroboros lies in the core nest of Western modernity: its Manichaean head is sealed by Western secularism (modern science, religiously secularized Gnosticism) formulated upon the pre-existing Augustinian theology, and its tail by classical Frankish Augustinian religiosity (Catholicism, Protestantism). In the same way that Augustinian theology in its holistic sense never managed to distance itself enough from the formative effects of its founder's Manichaean past, Western secularity and its modern forms of science and New-Age-type religiosities could not distance itself sufficiently from the thought categories of the theology it was based upon, returning to the Gnostic head with a new secularized Manichaean

³¹⁶ Saint Photius the Great, PG 102:181BC.

³¹⁷ Retoulas 2022, 163-165.

³¹⁸ Luke 18:6-8.

skin. Put coarsely, the worldwide popularity of yoga today has, in essence, more to do with Augustine *a la Franka* than with Hinduism in itself. The Gnostic spores at the Core of Western civilization have been present because and not despite Saint Augustine - Saint Augustine *a la Franka*, not Saint Augustine of Roman Christianity. Augustinian Gnosticism and Gnostic Augustinianism is not just *the American Religion*; it is *the religion of the West*³¹⁹.

The 15th Century Reign of Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed: The Apex of Ottoman Romanity

Save for momentary breaks, the Palaiologan Byzantine-Frankish religious-political pattern for the destruction of Christ's work and Ecumenical Romanity continued unabated into the following century only to be stopped by the Capture of Constantinople by the Roman Basileus Sultan Fatih Mehmed. As Tonia Kiousopoulou's interesting study, *Βασιλεύς ἢ Οἰκονόμος; Πολιτική ἐξουσία καὶ ἰδεολογία πρὶν τὴν Ἀλωση (Emperor or Manager: Political Authority and Ideology before the Fall [of Constantinople to the Ottomans])* shows the last Palaiologan Emperors basically decided to do away with the Ecumenical Roman Christian Empire which they strived systematically to replace with a political ideology based upon the medieval territorial Frankish Italian city-states with some sort of 'pro-racial' connotations (referred to as 'the Greek genus'). Generally speaking, the reigning Palaiologans, the fervently Francophile Constantine XI Dragasis Palaiologos (r. 1449-1453) in particular, had committed apostasy from Romanity and ecumenical Humanity – indeed, he had converted to Frankish Catholicism.

[Dragasis'] highest of treason against Romanity was [in later centuries] covered up by the Frankish-inspired legend of the marble/stoned (Catholic) King³²⁰.

Indeed,

Despite being invented by way of the Russia of the Westernist Peter the Great, the legend of the marble/stoned King and the restoration of the apostate-convert Catholic Palaiologans in Constantinople is the product of Western nationalism; it was created long after the Conquest and resembles similar Western legends. Its aim is clear: *the constant enslavement of Romanity to Western ideals*. And the proof of the Frankish imperial aims via

³¹⁹ Retoulas 2022, 22.

³²⁰ Kitsikis 2001, 33.

this legend is the attempt in [modern] Greece to connect the Danish dynasty of Glücksburg [(a collateral branch of the Frankish House of Oldenburg) (rulers of the Kingdom of Greece (1863–1924 and 1935–1973 AD))] with the Palaiologans³²¹.

To his credit, unlike the last Monarch of Trebizond, David Megas Comnenus (r. 1460-1461 AD), Constantine XI Dragasis Palaiologos, died fighting for his beliefs on the walls of Constantinople on May 29, 1453.

The only key institution that strived to uphold Ecumenical Romanity – even the worldly Imperial Authority – was the Roman Orthodox *Ecclesia*. In a steadfast line to Christianity, the Roman *Ecclesia* had no qualms about declaring the Emperor, John VII Palaeologus (r. 1390), to be “a holy man” since he was not involved in any Papist activities³²². Even more importantly, the Roman Orthodox Church continued to uphold the ecumenical legitimacy of the Roman Imperial Authority not only internally but even against other Orthodox Christians, such as the Russians for example.

During the 1390s, ... the grand prince of Moscow, Vasili I ... had expressed doubts as to the validity of the claims of the Byzantine emperor in view of the almost complete disappearance of his empire, asserting that there was a church but no emperor. The patriarch[, Anthony IV (p. 1389-1390 AD)] insisted that, on the contrary, the emperor was still autocrat of the Romans, indeed of all Christians. Everywhere the name of the emperor is commemorated by all patriarchs and metropolitans and bishops wherever men are called Christians³²³.

It may be the prerogative of the modern academic to pronounce their judgments unfettered just as Harris does (“the ideal of the universal emperor in a desperate situation has been dismissed as clinging to an outdated ideal in the face of hard reality. The point for the Byzantines, however, was that the ideal was the reality. Just as the loss of territory changed nothing, neither would its acquisition. As a Byzantine monk defiantly declared: ‘Our empire is that of Christ’³²⁴), or as Kiousopoulou also puts it, “orthodox utopia”³²⁵, history’s hard realities shred these judgements to pieces, as the Roman Ecumenicity the Ottoman Empire represented for roughly 500 years after 1453 proves.

³²¹ Kitsikis 2001, 36-37.

³²² Kiousopoulou 2008, 76.

³²³ Harris 2006, 23.

³²⁴ Harris 2006, 23.

³²⁵ Kiousopoulou 2008, 76.

In addition to the Frankish internal and external menace, a related threat to Romanity came from a brewing of neo-Paganism that lasted several centuries. Gemistus Plethon (c. 1355–1452/1454 AD) constitutes a special case³²⁶. Having been taught by the Jewish polytheist Elisaïous, Plethon was the founder of the secret proto-Masonic “faction of the Greeks [*sic.*]” whose ‘gospel’ was Plethon’s book, *Writing of Laws*, explaining the theology of Plato and Zoroaster. “He was the first neo-Greek and a proto-nationalist enemy of the ecumenical multi-ethnic empire, as was realised by the Romans, the Byzantines, and the Ottomans, and is the founder of the idea of a state which evolved into today’s nation-state. For this, he is considered the founder of the neo-Greek state of 1821 – 400 years before its actual establishment. He is the intellectual father of Florentine Machiavelli (1469-1527 Ad), the founder of Machiavellism based on political realism (*raison d’État*, in which whatever is in the interest of the state is good/virtuous”³²⁷. Kitsikis blames Plethon for the failure of today’s West:

The slipping of Western society towards the current rationalistic and technological monstrosity has its roots in the distorted understanding of the thought of ancient Greeks. And the one responsible for this is Plethon. Thus, if the Western pupil was bad, it was because the teacher was bad, by way of its philosophy, which the Platonic Academy of Florence taught from 1459 onwards. Indeed, it is not the fault of Plato for the miserable state of the West but Plethon; in turn, Machiavelli is literally a Plethonic Frankenstein. The merciless *raison d’État*/political realism as the cynical form of *raison raisonnante*] replaced ancient Greek harmony³²⁸.

Living within a philosophical-epistemological milieu predominated by ancient Greek philosophy, the Roman Christian Fathers resorted to the popularly available schools and categories of thought in order to make known and comprehensible the ontological realities revealed by the Lord Jesus Christ within the Jewish Biblical tradition towards the Realm of *Supraness*; in order to show the truths and the deficiency of the worldly knowledge of their time (philosophy, sciences, etc); and, in order to fight-off the various heresies that sprung-up as time passed.

Nevertheless, this is only half of the story for what is primarily true is that the Deity Himself decided and chose to incarnate Himself exactly in that particular historical religio-philosophical-social body, which He judged

³²⁶ For a treatment of Plethon’s macabre paganism, see Siniosoglou, Niketas. *Radical Platonism in Byzantium: Illumination and Utopia in Gemistos Plethon* (2011).

³²⁷ Kitsikis 2014, 191.

³²⁸ Kitsikis 2014, 227-228.

in such a state vis-à-vis Existence as suitable, having the appropriate receptivity and potential for understanding its meaning and meanings - as well as from other directions, as a perilous epoch in which the peril against God's plan from sin was also eminent. In other words - to the degree that it can be an endeavour of intellectual study - understanding the meaning of Christianity by a different historical religio-philosophical-social body (modern, post-modern or else) inescapably requires understanding it first in its original ancient Roman form, and, subsequently, providing a 'transliteration' for the new one (even if) in its own terms - of course, notwithstanding the fact that lived-out theophanic photagogy is the only source of true theology. This, and not Pope Benedict's 'Hellenisation' of Christianity, is the relation between Christianity and Judaism - and of any other 'trend' for that matter.

"Returning to the issue of Christianity, i.e., Roman Christianity, which the Franks for twelve centuries call Greek, the usage of mere nationalist terms, or any created thought categories to describe Christianity, is ultimately unwarranted in terms of Christianity. Of course, Christianity is historically actualized within specific ideological-social milieus - and up to that point, it is permissible. Yet, the *telos* of Christianity is Uncreatedness and the Way to it within human milieus. It starts from the Uncreated One, *via* the human being in a particular time and place by way of the Uncreated One, into the Realm that is *supra* time and place, and to the Uncreated One. To call Christianity as such Greek, Hellenic, Judeo-Greek, Judaic, etc., is unsupported within a Christian framework. That is why a greatest in divine things says: *Neither the Greek nor the Jewish logos exist at all in Christ. For the Logos of Christ is equally bereft of both polyarchy and monarchy that is circumcised around a single Person/Face*³²⁹. Thus, before the Second Coming, spiritually-informed created realities are used as launchpads and conduits to Uncreatedness in the Christian. Historically, for reasons known to God, the Lord Jesus Christ decided to enter *via* a certain religio-politico-environment of history, and in these environs, but also in their evolution, there is the well-established and discernable multiple Path to the Realm of Uncreatedness, the Christian dogmas of Uncreatedness. You first understand these realities in their given framework, and then you transliterate them into your milieu - this does not make them, e.g., Greek, Jewish, Roman as such. Conditionally, this finds applicability to Islamic *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* ('unity-of-being' 'Sufism'). Yet the same immunity towards created characterizations does not hold for created worldviews that find their *telos* into the physical and metaphysical Cosmos (e.g., Frankish Augustinianism (Catholicism and Protestantism), Platonism, Aristotelianism, Gnosticism, Talmudic Rabbinism, Zohar, Kabbalah, Theosophy, etc.), that remain open to self-characterizations of a created nature, e.g., nationalistic, universalistic,

³²⁹ Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 90:909B.

etc. Alas!!! From 800 AD onward, the created set itself to ‘correct’ the Uncreated, Frankish Augustinianism to innovate the Roman of Christianity of Uncreatedness.... Neither was Judaism dogmatically spared, for an old type of essentially Babylonian Talmudism (removed from the Roman Empire’s Judaism) was also renovated *a la Franka*. Duality in scriptural authority was instilled into it. It was apparent even in the newly divinized written sources (‘textualization’): a new Torah (Masoretic) and the Talmud – in fashion with the Bible and Augustinian theology. Talya Fishman’s book title, *Becoming the People of the Talmud: Oral Torah as Written Tradition in Medieval Jewish Cultures*, is not accidental. There were Frankish Papist Churches in the Middle Ages which physically had side by side on their altars, the Holy Bible and Thomas Aquinas’ *Summa Theologica*!!!^{330•331}

As Saint Maximus the Confessor says, “by providing them with their proper meaning, [Saint Dionysius the Aeropagitis (being radiated upon and within by uncreated energy)] transfers [/transliterates/transmigrates] the teachings of the Greek philosophers about God into the [realm] of [Christian] piety/reverence towards God”³³². Taking *the super* into the Realm of the Uncreated *Supra*.

As the Western model of the nomadic reclusive individual turns destructive towards man, a Frankish-based nationalism similarly turns destructive towards salvation for in the end it introduces a Jewish notion concerning the Messiah, i.e., a hero of a specific and circumscribed people, the Messiah of Israel and not of the nations. As such it brings destructive effects on Salvation to the Christian people for it creates a division between the Old Testament (that belongs to Israel) and the New Testament (that belongs to the nations) – which is particularly destructive for the Greeks when they (usually they apply Frankish and not Hellenic concepts unconsciously) argue against the need to refer to the Old Testament as “it concerns the nation of Yisra’el only. What is it to us? Are we Jews?”; and yet this fits both Western and Jewish Messianic endeavours. The identity and mission of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Incarnate God-*Logos*, the Saviour of humanity from sin (error in things Spiritual) into the Realm of *Supraness* and Uncreation by uncreated Energy is scripturally revealed only within the hierarchical inter-encapsulation of the Old and the New Testament. The history of Yisra’el is not merely a national history for Yisra’el is a typical people, a type of spiritual course of humanity moving towards the Third Eschaton; as it is for the Christians – especially the Greek

³³⁰ Father John Romanides (in Metropolitan Hierotheos 2010, 295).

³³¹ Retoulas 2022, 142-144.

³³² Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 4:388D.

people - concerning Christianity. The LORD GOD warns Prophet and King Solomon over the future of the Temple:

But if you turn away, and forsake my statutes and my commandments, which I have set before you, and shall go and serve other gods, and worship them: then I will pluck them up from my land which I have given them; and this house, which I have sanctified for my name, I will cast out of my sight, and will make it to be a proverb and a byword among all nations. And this house, which is high, shall be an astonishment to everyone who passes by it; so that he shall say, Why has the LORD done thus to this land, and to this house? Then they will say, Because they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, who brought them out of the land of Mizrayim, and laid hold of other gods, and worshipped them, and served them therefore he brought all this evil upon them³³³.

As the holy Elder Athanasios Mytilinaios prophetically attested as far back as in 1979:

Listen and be startled!!! Listen and be startled!!! For all these do not apply only to the Temple of Solomon but to our [Christian Temples/Churches] as well; and they do not apply only to the people of Israel but also to our [Christian] peoples too; the people of Israel are a typical people, and the Temple of Israel is a typical Temple too; what does it mean, *typical*? It means it typifies/is a type, a mould, an example/pattern/specimen/image showing how something is to be done; [and] what it can happen to any people if they do not tread carefully³³⁴.

And he continues:

A people that commits apostasy God abandons. ... What would you say, I ask you, not only about [the Jews] but about ourselves? How many majestic Churches/Temples do we [Christians] have? I will tell you now in case I have not already done so. ... In our monastery, we do build just as people built great Churches in villages, in towns, etc. And in this, they do well. And I say to the Fathers in our Monastery, Do you see this Church of Saint John the Theologian; Look, what a magnificent view it has! It can easily be turned into a bar. ... And people can come then just as they came to Solomon's Temple. What God warns against here, it did indeed happen to the last detail. Do you know how many times idolaters offer their sacrifices in the Temple of Solomon? Do you know that even idolatrous statues were put into that

³³³ Divre Hayyamim/Chronicles II 7:12-22, emphasis added.

³³⁴ Elder Father Archimandrite Athanasios Mytilinaios (Lesson 10, 3 Reigns 8:53a-66 and 9:1-15, October 24, 1979). Accessed May 21, 2022.
www.arnion.gr/mp3/omilies/p_athanasios/g_basileivn/g_basileivn_010.mp3.

Temple? Yes, indeed, God allowed that to happen. As He did allow for the Ark of the Covenant and its Keruvim to be lost, and so forth. Yes indeed God allowed that. And, similarly, to turn the Church of Saint John the Theologian] into a dance school or a bar for eating and dancing... I pray that such a thing does not happen. I pray for our eyes not to see such a degeneration. But with the course that our [Greek] people have been following, I worry that God will allow desolation. Except if we turn back [to Him] and change and, again, He shows us His steadfast love³³⁵.

There was not an inherent problem for Roman Christianity with Greek philosophy if the latter was properly understood and dealt with. Yet Plethon's Platonism went beyond the philosophical dimension. "Scholarios' epistles betray a deeper anxiety regarding Hellenism as an ideological and philosophical paradigm that sought to overthrow Orthodoxy in the Peloponnese. Addressing Oises, Scholarios describes the situation as follows:

There is contempt for the faith; strong infidelity everywhere; *for some it is called Hellenism*; for others mere fatalism and atheism. Others are indifferent and weak about the faith. Thus they abandon the doctrines of the Fathers (ἀποστασία [apostasy]) and frenzy in impieties taking advantage of the present ecclesiastical confusion. (Schol. Ad Raulem Oesem, OC 4.480.7-13: trans. In Constantelos 1998:69).

The real problem here does not seem to be any crude worship of idols, but rather the quest for ideological and philosophical religious alternatives to Roman Orthodoxy. Writing on the destruction of the *Nomoi*, Scholarios becomes more specific. Plethon did not stay with the letter or Platonic philosophy but attempted to proceed to its heart and seize its spirit: that is to say, its pagan spirit. This is corroborated by his suspicions regarding the real motivation behind Plethon's assault on Aristotle in the *Differences* which testify to his persuasion that Plethon was attempting to reconnect the aforementioned mythical dream-like version of paganism of the *Nomoi* with Platonic philosophy³³⁶.

If indeed you can remember Constantinople 1024 AD, you most certainly would not forget Thessaloniki 1185 AD: it was then that the Franks paid a typical visit.

³³⁵ Elder Father Archimandrite Athanasios Mytilinaios (Lesson 10, 3 Reigns 8:53a-66 and 9:1-15, October 24, 1979). Accessed May 21, 2022.

www.arnion.gr/mp3/omilies/p_athanasios/g_basileivn/g_basileivn_010.mp3.

³³⁶ Siniossoglou 2011, 143.

The evils which ensued were another succession of Trojan woes surpassing even the calamitous events of tragedy, for every house was robbed of its contents, no dwelling was spared, no narrow passageway was free of despoilers, no hiding place was long hidden. No piteous creature was shown any pity; neither was any heed paid to the entreaty, but the sword passed through all things, and the death-dealing wound ended all wrath. Futile was the flight of many to the holy temples, and vain was their trust in the sacred images. The barbarians, who confused divine and human things, neither knew how to honor the things of God nor to grant sanctuary to those who ran to the temples; the same fate which befell those who stayed in their common dwellings, namely, quick death dealt by the sword or being stripped bare of all possessions which the plunderers considered the greatest beneficence, met those who fled to the temples for refuge - not to mention the even more calamitous circumstance, the terrible affliction of the soul caused by the press and congestion of the throngs that entered the holy temples. Bursting in upon the sanctuaries with weapons in hand, the enemy slew whoever was in the way, and as sacrificial victims mercilessly slaughtered whomever they seized [the clergy]. *How could men who defiled the divine and took absolutely no heed of God be expected to spare human life?* It was less novel that they plundered the votive offerings to God, placed profane hands on the sacred, and looked with shameless eyes upon those things forbidden to be seen than it was unholy to have dashed the all-hallowed icons of Christ and his servants to the ground; firmly planting their feet on them, they forcibly removed their precious adornments and then threw the icons out into the streets to be trampled underfoot by the passers-by, or they cast them into the fire to cook their food³³⁷.

And there is more:

Even more unholy, and terrible for the faithful to hear, was the fact that *certain men climbed on top of the holy altar, which even the angels find hard to look upon, and danced thereon, deporting themselves disgracefully as they sang lewd barbarian songs from their homeland.* Afterwards, *they uncovered their privy parts and let the membrum virile pour forth the contents of the bladder, urinating round about the sacred floor;* they performed these lustral besprinklings for the demons, improvising hot baths for the avenging spirits through which they swam with great effort and thereby contriving great misfortunes for mankind and inflicting dreadful sufferings. When it was time to put an end to the horrors and for the hostilities to cease, the Sicilian commanders rose up to restrain the murderous onrush of the majority. One of the commanders, on horseback and clad in heavy armor, entered the temple of the myrrh-bearing martyr [Saint Demetrios]; some he smote with the flat side of his sword, and on others he inflicted wounds, but he was barely able to stay the course of evil.

³³⁷ Niketas Choniates 1984, 165-166, emphasis added.

These evils were not sufficient unto the Thessalonians, for if the day following the fall put an end straightway to the casting of the besieged down into the House of Hades, the subsequent afflictions pressed the wretched survivors in myriad other ways to seek the end of life and to prefer death to life, so that like sorely pressed Job, many prayed for death and obtained it not. And every other Latin soldier who took captive his opponent in battle ill-treated him and showed him no mercy. He perpetrated every evil proposed by the arrogance of victory; he robbed his adversary, and, subjugating him, inflicted injury that was indeed intolerable, defying description. Even if the Roman seized could speak the Italian language perfectly, he was nonetheless so far estranged from this alien race that not even his dress had anything in common with the Latins; it was as though he were detested by God, condemned to drink unmingled the Lord's cup of wrath and to take the cup unmixed. What death-dealing viper, or deadly heel-menacing serpent, or bull-killing lion does not overlook stale meat when sated with fresh game?³³⁸

Flashforward to the 1890s in Thessaloniki: Saint Demetrius and Rumi's *Mevlevi*s:

...the head of the *Selanik Mevlevihâne* at the time (1894-????), Ali Eşref Dede, whom Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his friends called “‘Talleyrand’ for his politico-religious abilities”³³⁹, constitutes a prototype of the Roman *Bektaşî-Mevlevî* person: “He was one of the most pious believers in the sainthood of Saint Demetrius [a martyr Saint who is often paired with Saint George]. ... Very few know that, while Christian liturgies were forbidden in the St Demetrius Church of Salonica, which had been converted into a mosque, in the *tekke* of the Mevlevîs the honoured saint for five centuries was St Demetrius”³⁴⁰.

Crossing the Rubicon again; Fatih Sultan and Roman Caesar Mehmed (1432-1481 AD):

...at the principal door of St. Sophia, [Fatih Sultan Mehmed] alighted from his horse and entered the dome; and such was the jealous regard for the monument that, on observing a zealous Muslim in the act of breaking the marble pavement, he admonished him with his scimitar, ... *the Churches of Constantinople were shared between the two religions* ... the Christian advocates presume to allege that this division had been an act, not of generosity, but of justice; not of a concession, but a compact; and, that, if

³³⁸ Niketas Choniates 1984, 166, emphasis added.

³³⁹ Christodoulou 2007, 59.

³⁴⁰ Christodoulou 2007, 59-61.

one-half of the city was taken by storm, the other moiety had surrendered on the faith of sacred capitulation³⁴¹.

Sacred Capitulation at that!!!
And keep in mind that,

...although the conversion of Constantinople's churches into mosques is a favorite theme of contemporary Ottoman authors, the majority of these conversions in fact took place during the reign not of Mehmed but of his successors³⁴².

The image of Fatih Sultan Mehmed as a kind of 'a barbarian monster' - typical of today's rage-based demonising Manichaean campaigns of the West against whoever does not capitulate to its whims and wants – is related to Frankish powers themselves as well as *aulic* accounts connected to the apostate Uniate Constantine XI Palaeologus Dragasis (for example, a Frankish Palaiologan 'agent', Doukas), or to later accounts, whose evolution is based on mere political and material interest via a service to the Frankish anti-Christian powers (Papists) for the extermination of Ecumenical Romanity and the establishment of a Papist-subdued Italian-type city state.

Yet, the Roman Orthodox Church and the Roman Greek people remained steadily anchored in the faith of Christ:

Patriarchal sources as evidence of Mehmed's open-mindedness to Greeks as well as Turks, and his image in the Patriarchal chronicles as an enlightened *tyrannos* [(ruler)] contrasts with his image in the Byzantine *aulic* histories where he is depicted as an apocalyptic monster. For the *aulic* [pro-Palaiologan] historians the conquest had meant the end if not of the world, at least of their world, whereas the patriarchate found new, and unexpected, life with Mehmed's decision to reconstitute it with spiritual and temporal leadership over the Greek community³⁴³.

Indeed,

The year 1453 saw the devastation of much of the Byzantine heritage. Mehmed, however, salvaged relics of the New Jerusalem and the New Rome, and in his patronage of Greek scholars and *literati* made his contribution to the continuance of the Greek tradition³⁴⁴.

³⁴¹ Gibbon 1827, 848–851.

³⁴² Kafescioglu 2009, 54.

³⁴³ Raby 1982, 6.

³⁴⁴ Raby 1983, 29.

Of course, the destruction of the 'Byzantine heritage' was put in motion and, for all intents and purposes, accomplished in 1204 AD by the Franks – and went on for as long as they continued to find Roman Greek domestic collaborators.

It is no accident that as recently as October 27th, 2002 a rare portrait medallion of Sultan Mehmed II, signed by Constanzo Da Ferrara, was auctioned by the British auction house, Christie's:

An old aftercast of the original medallion, the obverse with a profile portrait of Mehmed II, inscribed 'SULTANI MOHAMMETH OCHTHOMANI VGVLI BIZANTII INPERATORIS', which translates as 'Sultan Muhammad, descendent of Osman and Byzantine Emperor', the reverse with mounted figure in a rocky landscape in front of two trees, inscribed 'MOHAMETH ASIE ETERTIE INPERATORIS YMAGO EQVESTRIS IN EXERCITUS', which translates as 'Muhammad, Emperor of Asia and Greece, equestrian portrait on campaign', and 'OPUS CONSTANTII', work of Constantine³⁴⁵.

"Byzantine Emperor Mehmed of the Ottoman House (Osmanoglu/Osmanvgvli)".

The Roman Orthodox Church and the Roman Greek people remained steadily anchored in the faith of Christ and the Roman Ecumenical state:

This model was in danger of total extinction when the *basileas*-es [(kings)] and prelates of Byzantium gave in to the unscrupulous/remorseless *papocaesarism*³⁴⁶ of the [Frankish] Latins. Time after time, the Roman people tried to prevent the corrupted Byzantine officials from committing betrayal. During the 15th century many Byzantine bishops who had given into Uniatism, i.e., Catholicism, were banished by the people and escaped to Italy. In the Synod of Ferrara-Florence in 1438-1439, having the support of the whole of the Roman people, the Saint of Orthodoxy, Saint Mark Eugenikos (Bishop of Ephesus) fought to the end the staggering Byzantine king[, Constantine XI Dragases Palaiologos] who had surrendered to the Franks, and succeeded in bringing down the Palaiologans who had converted to Catholicism, and to tolerate the Alevi dynasty of the Ottomans of the crypto-Christian Mehmet the Conqueror who saved Orthodoxy from Frankish assimilation³⁴⁷.

³⁴⁵ "A Rare Portrait Medallion of Sultan Mehmed II: A Portrait Medallion of Sultan Mehmed II signed Constanzo Da Ferrara, Naples, 1481", accessed 9 February 2022. <https://www.christies.com/lot/a-portrait-medallion-of-sultan-mehmed-ii-6393393/?intObjectID=6393393&lid=1>.

³⁴⁶ *Papocaesarism*: total submission of the state to the religious authority.

³⁴⁷ Kitsikis 2001 30.

One of such *aulic* sources is George Sphrantzes' *Chronicon*. Contrary to its original (minus) version which contains almost no information on the Ottoman siege of Constantinople, its Majus version portrays Fatih Sultan Mehmed as a barbarous monster. The solution of this puzzle is solved in that the Majus version is a 16th century forgery of the fraudster Metropolitan of Monemvasia, Makarios Melissourgos (d. 1585 AD), who, committing another forgery, associated himself with the famous family of Melissinos of the Comnenian era by changing his name. Not satisfied with the results of his meeting with Pope Gregory XIII (p. 1572-1585 AD) in Rome in early 1573, he subsequently wrote a letter to the pope:

In his letter, written in bad Italian, the Orthodox [*sic.*], the prelate, thanked the Pope for the help he had given him. He then went on to describe in detail his ecclesiastical jurisdiction as well as the anti-Turkish activities he had been involved in in the previous years in the Peloponnese. Lastly, he confessed his unconditional entrance to the Roman Church [*sic.*, i.e., Catholic Institution] and asked to receive a Church title/position. In the latter case, he promised to work for the submission of the Peloponnese and later of all of Greece to the Catholic Church³⁴⁸.

Surrendering the Roman Greeks to the Frankish Catholics would have meant the end of Christianity, Romanity and Hellenity – and the latter would have been Augustinian-ly Frankishised even worse than the present state. This fraudster modern Greek historiography includes the Greek national resurrections against the Turks!!! – including the Pseudo-Sphrantzes' *Chronicon* (Majus). What blindness. Indeed, it seems the Peloponnese has serious issues with Romanity; contrary to, for example, Pontus and Cappadocia, which were both homes to personalities of Christian and Islamic Sainthood, the Peloponnese is usually associated with pagan anti-Roman currents. Is it because its Christianisation came rather late (5th century AD with re-Christianisation 9th-10th centuries AD)³⁴⁹? Is it because it remained under the Frankish yoke for centuries? And although it is remembered as a key centre of the first-inspired-as-Roman Revolution of 1821, it was exactly the place where its Roman character was extinguished with the assassination of the first Governor of Hellas, Ioannis Antonios Kapodistrias (1776-1831 AD) in Nafplion with the involvement of Frankish powers (France, England).

³⁴⁸ Tsiknakis 2015-2016, 127.

³⁴⁹ On the issue, see for example, Sweetman (2015): "This also makes it possible for Christianity and polytheism to have coexisted on a widescale within the Peloponnese" (Ibid., 311).

By confirming Gennadios' Patriarchal appointment, *Fatih saved Orthodox Christianity*. Because Gennadios was a real enemy of the Catholics, his appointment meant the end of Catholicism within the Ottoman Empire. *If a pro-Catholic Patriarch had been chosen, Orthodoxy would have gradually disappeared*. The Popes, who for many years had tried to submit the Eastern Church to their jurisdiction, did not succeed in this. Otherwise, they would have been successful in splitting the Byzantines in two permanently. This time, the election of Gennadios destroyed the hopes of the Pope³⁵⁰.

Being far more truthful and truthfully brave than his modern Greek counterparts, the late Bishop of Banat (and later the bishop of Zahumlje and Herzegovina), Atanasije Jevtić (Атанасије Јевтић; 1938–2021 AD) writes in his article, *Η Οὐνία ἐναντίον τῆς Σερβικῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας* [*The Uniate against Serbian Orthodoxy*]:

Until the coming of the Turks [(the Ottomans)] in the Serbian lands, the Serbian Orthodox Church suffered a lot from the Uniate pressures originating from multiples points: the Bosnian Franciscans and the coastal Catholic bishoprics, the governments of the Roman Catholic states of Austria and Venice, and, of course, the Vatican itself, which using its missionaries and representatives, was conducting a “hunt for Orthodox” in Illyria and generally in the East. This hunt was zealously intensified especially after the appearance of the [Protestant] Reformation when Roman Catholicism had to cover for losses in the West by coercively forcing the Orthodox to accept the ‘union’ with Rome... The methods that were used in the previous false-named and violent ‘unions’ of Florence (1439) and Brest-Litovsk (1594) were further utilised by the Vatican machinery in a true Crusade against the Orthodox people and the Church in the East in favour of ‘the Uniate’; and the Serbs and Serbian Church were always in the first line of fire³⁵¹.

Yet,

After the conquering of the Serbian lands by the Turks [(Ottomans)] at the end of the fifteen century, the relatively fast re-construction of the Serbian Patriarchate of Peć under [Saint and] Patriarch Makarije Sokolović [(Макарије Соколовић)] (p. 1557-1574) prevented in a great degree the uniate-isation of the Serbs since this worthy Patriarch manned about 40 bishoprics that reached far north into the Austro-Hungarian and Rumanian territories. During this period, Serbian Orthodoxy was referred to as “Greek

³⁵⁰ Mirmiroğlu 1945, 59.

³⁵¹ Bishop Atanasije Jevtić 1999, 153.

faith", "Serbian faith", "Faith of Jerusalem" and other similar names, while it was always called, schism and the faithful, schismatics by the Catholics³⁵².

Of course, a certain Islamising pressure was also present there.

The success of Mehmed's open-minded treatment of the Greeks can be measured by his image in sixteenth-century Greek historiography. The despotic tyrant of the aulic sources gives way to the enlightened *tyrannos* of the sixteenth-century popular and patriarchal histories, where Mehmed is praised for his appreciation of Greek as well as Muslim talent: *ἡγάπα δε καὶ τοὺς σοφοὺς, οὐ μόνον τοὺς ἐκ τοῦ γένους αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς ἐξ ἡμῶν* [*For he loved the wise men not only of his race but also the ones of ours*]³⁵³.

Contrary with what might be imagined, Fatih established his library not based on the Palaiologan remnants but through his own efforts of saving, collecting and systematically studying a plethora of Orthodox Christian and ancient Greek works. His collection of Christian relics was incomparable and centred upon - something contested within Islam - the Crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ!!!

Just under half of Mehmed's relics bore no relevance to the teachings or even the assimilated legends of Islam. What is more, four of the Christological items would have been repudiated by a Muslim as they were claimed to relate to the crucifixion, which Isa[/Jesus], Islam teaches, never suffered³⁵⁴.

Moreover,

Thus, Jacopo Tebaldi in his description of the fall of Constantinople emphasizes that Mehmet II leaves his new subjects perfectly free to practice Christian worship³⁵⁵ and it is known that he has, shortly after the conquest, summoned the Patriarch of Constantinople, Gennadios Scholarios, to enlighten him on Christian dogma³⁵⁶. In addition, this conquest places in the hands of the sultan the relics of the Passion of Christ (the tunic, fragments of the cross, the crown of thorns, the veronica ...) to which the Muslim

³⁵² Bishop Atanasije Jevtić 1999, 154.

³⁵³ Raby 1983, 28.

³⁵⁴ Raby 1980, 109.

³⁵⁵ Agostino Petrusi. *La caduta di Costantinopoli. Le testimonianze dei contemporanei* [*The Conquest of Constantinople: The Testimonies of the Contemporaries*]. Milano: Mondadori, 1986. p. 180, quoted in Viallon 2011.

³⁵⁶ "The discussion between the sultan and the patriarch was reported by the interpreter in *The Diary of Ebuzziya (Mecmua-i Ebuzziya)* published in Istanbul, in 1911" (Viallon 2011).

doctrine does not give any value since it considers that the crucifixion is a mystification, but the sultan ensures to protect them from looting and destruction. Finally, the Venetian Franciscan, Francesco Suriano (1450-1529), tells³⁵⁷ that the sultan would have received the painter Gentile Bellini in a room of his palace where an oil lamp was burning, placed in front of an icon of the Virgin.³⁵⁸

It would be sacrilegious, as well as academically deficient, to try to do justice to the re-establisher of Romanity in Konstantiniyye, Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed in this part of our discussion. I will do so later. For even this is impossible given the limitations of this book. Another endeavour is needed; and this is my forthcoming work, *Engenderings of Ecumenical Romanity: The Christian-Islamic Vision of Basileus Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror*. The themes featured there will include: the Comnenian Pontic origins of the Ottoman Dynasty according to the Sultan, his personal spiritual relationship with Patriarch Gennadios, his overwhelmingly Pontic entourage, his conversion to Roman Orthodox Christianity (with or without his Islamic identity), his possible assassination in 1481 via collaboration between his opium-using son, Sultan Bayezid II (1481-1512 AD) and the Western maritime superpower of the time, the Venetians (employing his personal doctor, the formerly Jewish, Venetian citizen, Paşa Maestro Iacobo), within the framework of his campaign to establish Roman Christian Orthodoxy and Islamic Romanity East (towards Jerusalem) and West (towards Rome), to name only a few.

We are very blessed that we have at least Frankish works that, although plainly deficient in the related theological aspect, are instrumentally enlightening for our understanding of the intellectual-religious world of Basileus Sultan Fatih Mehmed, such as the work of Julian Raby. This includes primarily his DPhil thesis at Oxford, *El Gran Turco: Mehmed the Conqueror as a Patron of the Arts of Christendom* (1980) and various relevant articles such as *A Sultan of Paradox: Mehmed the Conqueror as a Patron of the Arts* (1982), *Mehmed the Conqueror's Greek Scriptorium*, etc³⁵⁹. We should not fail to mention Franz Babinger's *Mehmet the Conqueror and His Time* (based on his work in German) the principal book in the Anglophone literature on the subject. The latest addition in Turkish is

³⁵⁷ Francesco Suriano, *Il trattato di Terra Santa e dell'Oriente* (1524), Milano, Girolamo Golubovich, 1900.

³⁵⁸ Viallon 2011.

³⁵⁹ I would like to thank Dr. Julian Raby, Director of the Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution for giving me permission to use his Oxford thesis (private message in academia.com, May 6th, 2023).

İsmail Erünsal's *Fatih'in Enteleksüel Portresi (Fatih's Intellectual Portrait)* (2023), a superb publication (for paperback) by Timaş Yayınları, which includes artistic reconstructions e.g., of Fatih's copy of Homer's *Iliad* (found in the Topkapı Sarayı), etc.

As for his other religious identity, Fatih Sultan Mehmed's Islamic religiosity was fully *tasavvufi* and of the *vahdet-i vücud* variety. Indicatively, Raby writes:

Only one copy of the Koran written for Mehmed has so far come to light. This can be put down to a number of reasons - the presence in the Sultanic Library, no doubt, of fine, earlier copies of the Koran, or the accident of Fortune. What is surprising, though, is that among the known books copied for the Sultan there is, on the one hand, a dearth of commentaries, *tafsir*³⁶⁰ [Islamic exegesis based on reason-based theology (*kelam*)], and on the other, a plethora of works of Sufi literature³⁶¹.

Even when it comes to a *tarikāt* related to Islamic exoterism and, in the de-Romanising phase of the Ottoman Empire (an anti-Fatih Ottoman trend from the mid-18th century onwards) related to (after doctrinal de-*vahdet-i vücud*-isation) non-Turkish-originated Islamism, the *Nakşibendiyye*, we learn that:

Continuing a trend that their Central Asian spiritual ancestors had begun, Ottoman Naqshabandīs defied the criticism [of their support of Ibn Arabī]. They became some of the very transmitters of that greater interest in Ibn al-ʿArabī that had developed within Persian, earlier than Arab, or Ottoman, Sufism. In return, their reputation as the devoted students and disseminators of his teachings became an integral part of their appeal. It has been suggested that what propelled Sultan Mehmed II to build the first Naqshabandī *tekke* of the capital for Ishaq Bukhārī-i Hindī was precisely the association of the Naqshabandī shaykhs and their Central Asia mentors with the expertise in the *wahdat al-wujūd*. Ab-dullāh Ilāhī has been described as a principal propagator of the *wahdat al-wujūd* in Anatolia and the Balkans through his teaching in Istanbul and Yenice-i Vardar [(present-day Giannitsa in mainland Greece)] and through his extensive use of terminology and concepts derived from Ibn al-ʿArabī in a series of works of prose and poetry³⁶².

Of course, we should find nothing surprising in any of this; on the contrary, it is entirely expectable.

³⁶⁰ The “i” in the word “tafsir” is a small i with dot above and macron.

³⁶¹ Ruby 1980, 184.

³⁶² Le Gall 2005, 125.

Contra to the spirit of the degenerate Palaiologan *aulic* sources, even Patriarch Kyrillos Loukaris (1572-1638 AD), who was officially condemned for collusion with Protestant Calvinists (and executed by the Ottomans on the behest of Frankish Catholics), expressed the spirit of Christ in the early 17th century:

It is not forgiven to us to sacrifice our faith for the sake of political reasons, for the salvation of the soul is above the worldly good³⁶³.

1453: The Roman Greek historian Michael Kritovoulos of Imvros (c. 1410-c. 1470 AD) calls Fatih Sultan Mehmed who, standing on the Acropolis of Athens, was pondering the ancient glory of Hellas “ὡς σοφός τε καί φιλέλλην καί μέγας βασιλεύς” (“as a wise Hellenophile and great King/Emperor”)³⁶⁴. Coming soon: flashforward to the early 1930s AD...

In light of the above and as far as Roman Orthodox Christianity and the preservation of the Greek language is concerned, Demetracopoulos wrote in 1872 during the Palaeologan era, “The Greek nation owes deeply to those men and to the rest of the leaders of the Orthodox Eastern Church who resisted the illogical/irrational wants of the Papist court”³⁶⁵.

Ottoman Romanity: From the 16th to the mid-19th Century

Judging from ‘the Great Eagle’ Fatih Sultan Basileus Mehmed’s spiritual and political worldview and his actions, there must be little doubt that if his noble work had not been violently stopped by the actions of his elder son and the Venetians via his Jewish doctor Maestro Iacobo – or if his heir of choice, Cem Sultan, had taken the Ottoman *Archē* - the Roman Orthodox head of the Roman ‘Byzantine’-Ottoman Bicephalous Eagle would have developed in parity with its *vahdet-i vücud tasavvufi* Islamic counterpart. Such would have been the reality of the ground as the apostate Patriarchate of Rome since 1046 AD would have been restored to Christianity and the enslaved Western Roman peoples would have been liberated from the Frankish yoke. However the rather reductionist mono-directionally Islamic vision of Sultan Bayezid II and the incorporation of the non-Roman Arab lands into the Empire moved the empire towards Sunnisation (always within the parameters of *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf*),

³⁶³ “Nu ne este iertat să jertfim credința noastră de dragul unor rațiuni poitice, deoarece mântuirea sufletului este mai pe sus de binele lumesc” (Pr. Bodogae 1943, 56.).

³⁶⁴ Kritovoulos of Imvros in Reinsch 1983.

³⁶⁵ Archimandrite Andronicus Demetracopoulos 1872, η'-θ'.

which, at least on paper, had a nominal detrimental effect on the status of Roman Orthodox Christians. Not to forget that in the 13th century the initially non-Roman "Ibn 'Arabi himself was shocked to see certain practices in Rum, particularly the lack of enforcement of certain shari'a principles with respect to non-Muslims there"³⁶⁶. But even the newly introduced 16th century official legal distinctions between Muslim and non-Muslims remained sporadic and unsystematic; they became standardised during the course of 18th century³⁶⁷ – and this, as we will see, was concomitant with the development of non-Roman, religio-secular, ideological-political currents (Westernism, Islamism, non-Roman *tasavvufi* Islamism etc.) in the de-Romanising Empire.

The heyday of "Rumi" as a socially and culturally meaningful category spans the thirteenth to seventeenth centuries³⁶⁸.

Rum(i) equals Roman – which the Western translators render, *Greek*. As Zachariadou points out, after the battle of Manzikert in 1071, "the term 'Rum' (gradually) began to mean not only the Byzantine lands and their inhabitants but also the Muslims who had settled there"³⁶⁹. "The Moroccan ambassador to Istanbul in 1589 was at least aware of this dissonance, while it obviously confused him a bit:

That city was the capital of the lands of Rum [rendered "grece" by the French translator], and the seat of the empire, the city of caesars. The Muslims who live in that city now call themselves "Rum" [again rendered "grece" by the translator] and prefer that origin to their own. Among them, calligraphy, too, is called *khatt rūmī* ["l'écriture grecque"]"³⁷⁰.

In his discussion on Romanity and the intricacies of the modern form of Greek identity, 'Britain's greatest [then] living travel writer', Sir Patrick Michael Leigh Fermor states in his book, *Roumeli: Travels in Northern Greece*:

...none of all this must be confused with the Holy Roman Empire invented by Charlemagne and endorsed by the Pope in A.D. 800, and destroyed by Napoleon at the [Frankish German-French Co-]Federation of Rhine [(1806-1813)]. What an influence the idea of Caesar's name has exerted on history!

³⁶⁶ Kafadar 2007, 10.

³⁶⁷ See Kafadar 2007, 12-13.

³⁶⁸ Kafadar 2007, 16.

³⁶⁹ Zachariadou 1999, 61.

³⁷⁰ Kafadar 2007, 16.

The Byzantines wore it *by right*, the Holy Roman Emperors *adopted it*. 'Tsar' is a Slav form of the same word, and until recently, the Kings of England, as successors to the Great Mogul, bore the title *Kaisar-i-Hind*³⁷¹.

The religio-political term 'Byzantium/Byzantine' was systematically used after 1557 AD, when the Frankish Catholic scholar Hieronymus Wolf (1516-1580 AD) published his work, *Corpus Historiae Byzantinae*, as a collection of 'Byzantine' sources. It was built upon the pre-existing anti-Roman Carolingian Frankism but with a modernising twist. We were then in the Renaissance with the age's apparent positive references to Greekness and ancient Greek civilisation. The previously derogative 'Greek' label could not be sustained as such, so, on the one hand, it did come in line with ancient Greek terminology (Byzantium had first been established as a colony of Megara), and yet, on the other hand, the defamation continued in an unabated 'Carolingian spirit'. Interestingly, Wolf's work on 'Byzantium' was intrinsically related to the study of the rise of the Ottomans, which he had experienced first hand during their siege of Vienna (1529 AD). In the following 100 years, remaining faithful to its tribal-feudal precepts, the acrimonious, Frankish, anti-Roman thrust began to develop a race-based trend of re-interpretations of Roman history that would culminate in the various theories of modern nationalism in the following century. Its most characteristic representative was one of the most well-known French philologists and historians of the Renaissance, Du Cange (1610-1688 AD).

Similarly, the Frankish attack on Romanity was two-pronged, staying loyal to the West's dualist nature. In addition to Augustinian Catholicism, the newly invented Protestantism also peaked in the person of Martin Crusius (1524-1607 AD). In a trajectory that religio-politically reaches back to the Fall of Constantinople to the Frankish Catholic Crusaders in 1204 AD, through the largely religiously apostate Frank-serving local elite, the Dynasty of the Palaiologans, under the political auspices of which Augustinianism had become a living reality in the late Byzantium (the 14th Varlaam of Calabria Controversy), the anti-Roman and essentially anti-Hellenic phenomenon of Western Philhellenism appeared among the Frankish so-called 'humanist' intellectuals of the 16th century Renaissance. It was a phenomenon that has been echoed down the centuries in the establishment of the Bavarian Ottonian Rule in the 'New Greece' of the 19th century. *It was anti-Hellenic/anti-Roman through a professed love of anything Greek. Yet it was love with a catch, a love as long as that 'anything' was deformingly assimilated into Frankish worldview categories.* Its core aim: the destruction of Christianity and its core centre, Monasticism.

³⁷¹ Leigh Fermor 1986, 99, emphasis ours.

Indeed, the ideological thrust for the hijacking of the Roman Greek Revolution of 1821 was Western Philhellenism, established during the Frankish Renaissance when a reconciliation - in reality, merely nominal - with anything Greek was forcefully implemented. The Frankish Philhellenism of the 18th century onwards provided this distorted neo-Hellenism to the Greeks (former Romans) and created the general phenomenon of Grequists (*Γραικόλοι*) and Grequism (*Γραικυλισμός*) in modern Greece – i.e., of self-slavery to the modern Frankish West.

The father of Renaissance Philhellenism was the Frankish Protestant intellectual, Martin Crusius (1524-1607 AD). Through the establishment of a theological dialogue between Protestant Franks and the Roman Ecumenical Patriarchate in Ottoman Constantinople, as well as a tentative plan that fortunately remained only on paper, the real aim of Crusius – which even accounts for his interest in learning Greek in the first place - was “the propagation of the Lutheran religion in the Orthodox East” with

...the ‘proselytism’ of the [Roman] Orthodox Christians of the East to the Protestant faith through the use of appropriate theological texts – above all a translation of the New Testament – written in vernacular Greek³⁷².

Crucius’ methods remain key in similar modern Protestant attempts, often used against Orthodox Slavophone countries.

As we will see, Protestantism and (neo-)Gnosticism have been largely interwoven – even in an organic interwoven antithesis via Blessed Augustine. What has been generally academically neglected is the relation of key expressers of Frankish Philhellenism, such as Lord Byron and his girlfriend, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (the author of *Frankenstein*) with neo-Gnosticism, and specifically occultism and satanism. Peter Schock’s book, *Romantic satanism: Myth and the Historical Moment in Blake, Shelley, and Byron* is an interesting treatment of the subject. Indeed, the neo-Gnostic presence is paramount in Shelly. As Schock writes:

Sperry locates Shelleyan irony in his radically contrasting perspectives on the human condition, emphasizing Shelley’s habitual swerving between representations of high idealism (*Prometheus Unbound*) and reality (*The Cenci*). Works like *The Witch of Atlas* seem composed as a deliberate effort to escape the latter in a realm of supernatural play³⁷³.

³⁷² Toufexis 2009, 316-317.

³⁷³ Schock 2003, 143.

How different it is from the genuine love of Hellenity and the Orthodox Christianity of the Roman Ottoman Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed!!!

And as I have written elsewhere: “In this glowing bogland, Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948 AD), in a fully New Age, neo-Gnostic fashion, struggles to recast Krishna away from the monist unity of spirit and matter.”³⁷⁴

Krishna of the Gita is perfection and right knowledge personified, but the picture is imaginary. That does not mean that Krishna, the adored of his people, never lived. But perfection is imagined. The idea of a perfect incarnation is an aftergrowth³⁷⁵.

“*Contra* Saint Nicetas Stethatos on Saint Symeon the Theologian’s *theosis*-based theology, i.e., real theology.”³⁷⁶

The sign of Perfection, thanks to which we recognise the perfect man, fully mature with the fullness of Christ, and entirely possessed by the SPIRIT, is the unerring knowledge of God, from which, bestowed from on high by the Holy Spirit, flows the word of superior wisdom, from which derives the aptitude to function as a theologian ... “Happy the pure in heart; they shall see God”^{377, 378}.

“If Gandhi writes that his Hinduism relates to human imagination, i.e., humanly energized fantasies, it would be more accurate to say humanly and demonically energized fantasies, for human Perfection from the Father, through Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit, is uncreatedly divinely energized enhypostatic imagination ontologically engulfing the whole of the human being in this life...”³⁷⁹. So, not supernatural but supranatural...

In the same way, the Gnostics have distorted Christ and Christianity.

In the Gnostic gospels there are mythical stories about Jesus which are very much parallel to the Krishna myths which is also quoted by the [modern] Krishnites to support their thesis. But these were written well after 300 AD. If we look closely, we will see that Buddha also had very close similarity in many of the above factors³⁸⁰.

³⁷⁴ Retoulas 2022, 346.

³⁷⁵ Gandhi 1946-1947, 15.

³⁷⁶ Retoulas 2022, 347.

³⁷⁷ Matthew 5:8.

³⁷⁸ Hausherr 1990, 34.

³⁷⁹ Retoulas 2022, 347.

³⁸⁰ Ninan 2004, 91.

Günter Lüling's book, *A Challenge to Islam for Reformation: The Rediscovery and Reliable Reconstruction of a Comprehensive Pre-Islamic Christian Hymnal Hidden in the Koran under Earliest Islamic Reinterpretations* constitutes in its core a simultaneous Protestant neo-Gnostic attack on both Christianity and Islam.

Although protected by the Ottoman 'yoke', the Patriarchal authorities were able to repel the neo-Frankish religious attack of the 16th century, Frankish Philhellenism had another conflicting ugly face. Apart from seeing them as a potential pool of converts, Crusius considered Roman Ottoman Greeks as political pawns to be played against the mighty Ottoman Empire of his time. This would also echo down into the late 18th and 19th century in a 'Wolf-Crusius fashion', yet the Ottoman Empire was de-Romanising:

The name "Greek" for the Eastern part of the Roman empire was inaugurated by Charlemagne in 794, as already noted. But the term "Byzantine" was [actively] established by Great Britain, France and [post-Petrine religiously Frankishized anti-Orthodox] Russia as part of their plans to break up and divide the Ottoman Empire among them. The first plan was evidently drawn up during the meeting between Emperors Napoleon I and Alexander I, floating on a raft in the river at Tilsit, Germany in 1806. The core of Napoleon's plan was the liberation of the ancient Hellenes, now called Romans, from both their Roman conquerors and from their Turkish conquerors with one cannon shot. Part of this same plan was to convince Orthodox peasants that the ancient Romans did not speak Greek [at all], like the Romans of Patriarchate of Constantinople, but Latin. Therefore, the Church of New Rome cannot be Roman. So, it is in reality a Greek Church and nation just like Great Father Charlemagne always said. In this way the agents of Russia, Britain and France swarmed over the European part of the Ottoman Empire, called the "Land of the Romans [(Rumeli)]" (the Balkans), telling all who for centuries have been calling themselves Romans and getting their education in Greek, that their ethnic enemies are those from the Phanar [Patriarchate] who also call themselves Romans, [(that they)] are in reality a bunch of Greeks³⁸¹.

The pattern of conquering by the creation of Frankish-serving local elites, alienated from and largely against the indigenous people, would repeat itself down the centuries. It placed a unique role in the establishment of the Neo-Hellenic Kingdom by Frankishised Russia, Britain, and France in the 19th century. As Frazee writes:

The ultimate goal of the papacy and Catholic missionaries was a united Christian church, one in doctrine and moral teaching, and looking to the

³⁸¹ Father John Romanides 1977.

bishop of Rome as head of all believers. The Council of Florence was always in the mind of the Latins: a union had occurred and it could happen again. Most missionaries believed *that if the leaders of the Eastern Church were convinced that they should sign a Catholic profession of faith it would only be a matter of time until the whole church was brought into corporate union with Rome*. Some Orthodox and Eastern Christian hierarchs were won over, but their communities did not follow them. ... *The Turkish millet organization was also a major deterrence to conversion to Catholicism. Eastern Christians, in view of the Turks, had become apostates to their communities – they had joined the ‘Franks’ and were no longer to be trusted*³⁸².

Protestant missionaries followed suit, destructively so...

“Towards the end of the eighteenth century,

the word “Rum” had acquired a new political meaning that would only intensify during the Greek War of Independence in the 1820s and thereafter. An account of the annihilation of the Janissaries in 1826 castigates the “heretical” soldiers for having been too cozy with the Greek rebels during the “sedition of the wicked Rum infidels (*kefere-I fecere-i Rûm*) in the year 1820–21.” It must have something to do with this new sensitivity that “Anatolia” acquires a broader range. In the same source is another striking usage: the brief vitae of Hacı Bektaş Veli mentions his migration “from Khurasan to Anatolia,” offering a new take on the time-honored Khurasan-to-Rum axis that prevails in late medieval and early modern hagiographies of saintly figures of the lands of Rum, many of whom are said to have hailed from Khurasan. It is ironic that, at around the same time, many Greek intellectuals were feeling embarrassed about the Greeks’ self-designation of *Romaioi* and exerting their energy and influence to replace it by “Hellenes” and “Greeks.” When those intellectuals of the Greek enlightenment and, later, independence started to feel uncomfortable with the Byzantino-Ottoman associations of the word, their observations were based on a perception of *Romaioi* identity as defining a whole variety of institutions and attitudes³⁸³.

In 2002, Şevki Koca, *alias* Derviş Fecrî, a member of a prominent *Bektaşîyye* family, argued to us – and to our initial surprise— that ‘Byzantium’ did not really die in 1453 but in 1826, during the reign of Sultan Mahmud II, with the destruction of the *Yeniçeris* (the Janissaries) and the abolition of the *Bektaşîyye*, the religious order they belonged to. In the *Arab Bulletin* (April 1917), the Arabist scholar, archaeologist and

³⁸² Frazee 2006, 313, emphasis ours. We will see if this view of apostasy is wholesaley and unconditionally valid later on.

³⁸³ Kafadar 2007, 18.

mentor of the champion of anti-Roman-Ottoman Arabism, T.E. Lawrence (known as Lawrence of Arabia), David George Hogarth (1862 – 1927), described the 'reform achievements' of Sultan Mahmud II as,

...nothing less than the elimination of the most Byzantine features in constitution and government ... the chief reforms carried through under Mahmud were all anti-Byzantine. They did not cause the *Osmanlı* state to be born again but, at least, they purged it of official sin³⁸⁴.

The *Türkçe/Osmanlıca-İngilizce Redhouse Sözlüğü* (*Turkish/Ottoman-English Redhouse Dictionary*) of 1890 describes the term *Rumi* (Roman) as "1. pertaining to the ancient Romans or to the Byzantine Greeks. 2. pertaining to Ottomans, to Turkey, or to Anatolia"³⁸⁵. As such, the equivalent Ottoman and modern Turkish terms for Romanity are *Rumiyane* and *Rumluk* respectively.

A Greek officer and one of the leaders of the 'Constantinople Organisation'³⁸⁶, Athanasios Souliotis-Nikolaidis, who was sent to Istanbul from the newly-formed 'Kingdom of Greece' to politically organise Constantinople's Roman Hellenes in the first decade of the 20th century, tells us that a former *Şeyhülislâm* addressed him, saying: "Excuse me my *effendi*, or should I say my *Αυθέντης*"³⁸⁷: We, not you, are the successors of the Byzantines [, i.e. Romans]; the Byzantine nobles would never have accepted you"³⁸⁸.

Thus it was that those who eventually learned (preferred?) to call themselves Turks and Greeks abandoned, for different reasons and toward different ends, their attachment to *Rumi/Romaioi* identity during the course of the eighteenth century, just as new hegemonic powers were emerging with a new take on the Roman past. That, of course, is the "real" Rome, not the lesser - the Anatolian, i.e., eastern version³⁸⁹.

³⁸⁴ Quoted in Kedourie 1987, 91.

³⁸⁵ *Türkçe/Osmanlıca-İngilizce Redhouse Sözlüğü* [*Turkish/Ottoman-English Redhouse Dictionary*] 1999, 963.

³⁸⁶ For an epigrammatic reference to the 'Constantinople Organisation' (c. 1908-1912) as an alternative political path for the Roman Hellenes and the people of the Ottoman Empire in general to the progressively Frankish-derived nationalism of the Greek Kingdom, see Çağlar 1997.

³⁸⁷ *Αυθέντης* (pron. afthentis) is a Byzantine title meaning 'Master' or 'Lord' from which the Ottoman title *Effendi* is derived.

³⁸⁸ Souliotis-Nikolaidis 1984, 137-138.

³⁸⁹ Kafadar 2007, 21.

And even here we can see to what extent *Charlemagne's Lie of 800 AD*, Romanity, the Roman Empire and the Roman identity is embedded in Western epistemology. Even Cemal Kafadar, who provides us with a plethora of references on *Rumi-ness/Romanness*, could not transcend its suffocating walls. And in this the Harvard Professor is in error; for his standpoint is essentially Frankish, a position also held by his university. For "Rumi" (Roman) is neither needed "as a panacea to the excesses of nationalism, a mechanical alternative to "Turkish" or "Ottoman,""³⁹⁰ for there is a Roman Turkish nationalism, i.e., Atatürk's Kemalism, nor it is necessarily "a part of an attempt to reinsert the "Turks-as-Romans" into European identity"³⁹¹ for, as long as they do not cling to Frankism and its byproducts (Islamism, Arabism, Internationalism, New Age Movement, etc.) the Turks-as-Romans are incomparably more Roman than the Frankishised-Westerners-as-Romans after 1046 AD.

The Frankish dreams for de-Romanisation/de-Hellenisation of Romanity were first realised by the establishment of a Monarchical regime under the Bavarian Frankish Catholic Otto Friedrich Ludwig (1815-1867 AD) in the newly founded Kingdom of Greece in 1932. Intellectually, the distorting Frankishisation of Romanity/Hellenity there came by way of the wretched scholar Adamantios Korais (1748–1833 AD), a father of modern Greek nationalism. Taken in by Crusius-like fables, led by philosophical *Encyclopedia* (the so-called Enlightenment), totally devoid of deep knowledge of the nature of Western philosophy and religion and overwhelmed in Frankish mimesis, Korais came to imagine modern France as representing a modern version of ancient Greece that Greeks had to re-adopt essentially to be liberated from themselves. Of course, this fantasy had only an exoterically provable dimension while esoterically carrying a Hellenism/Romanity passed through Frankish Augustinian thought categories now secularised in the form of the Enlightenment – and more specifically, in Calvinistic pietism. Accordingly, Korais introduced a metaphysical definitional dimension in religion - something totally antithetical to Roman Christianity and Roman Islam. As we have seen, in the latter, the definitional dimension is not the physical vs. the intelligible metaphysical, but the physical and metaphysical in relation to the energetic Uncreated. Korais' introduction constitutes the worldisation of religion by way of metaphysics.

The Greek Enlighteners, with Adamantios Korais as their patriarch, were metaphysical in their theology and it was they who transported the conflict between empiricists and metaphysicists to Greece. However, the Orthodox

³⁹⁰ Kafadar 2007, 21.

³⁹¹ Kafadar 2007, 21.

monks of Mount Athos, the Kollyvades and other Hesychast Fathers remained empiricists in their theological method. The introduction of metaphysics in our popular and academic theology is due, principally, to Korais. For this reason, Korais became the authority for our academic theologians, as well as for the popular moral movements. This means that the purification of the heart has ceased to be considered as a presupposition of theology and its place has been taken by scholastic education. The same problem appeared in Russia at the time of Peter the Great (17th-18th century). Thus the Fathers are considered to be philosophers (principally Neoplatonists like St. Augustine) and social workers. This has become the prototype of the pietists in Greece. Furthermore, Hesychasm is rejected as obscurantism. The so-called progressive ideas of Korais comprise from the fact that he was a supporter of the Calvinistic and not the Roman Catholic use of metaphysics, and his theological works are intense in this Calvinistic pietism (moralism)³⁹².

Under Western Frankish overlordship the *autexousiotis* (*self-authority*)-based centres of human-glorification-in-Christ (*theosis*) of the 19th- early 20th centuries, which had survived Christian Roman 'Byzantium' and the Roman Ottoman Empire, came under the attack by Frankish overlords and their domestic collaborators.

The three Empires of the Tsarist Russia, Great Britain and France created the New Hellenism and the Westernised Orthodoxy by way of their Freemason agents who were behind Adamantios Korais [(1748-1833 AD)]. They established the Theological Schools of the University of Athens and of the [C]Halki Island [in Istanbul] in order to transform the therapeutic Orthodoxy of the [Old Testament] Prophets, the Apostles and the [*Ecclesia*] Fathers, that was mainly in monasticism, into the effigy of a metaphysical Tsarist Orthodoxy. Although a revolution against this betrayal has begun some years now, there were and there are those who continue to reject therapeutic Orthodoxy; they continue to prescribe medicines of spiritualism, or ontology-metaphysics, or personalism³⁹³.

During Bavarian rule, monasteries in the newly emerged Greek Kingdom after 1832 were spiritually exterminated (conceptualized as public utility companies offering goodly pious works) and institutionally decimated (their number reduced from 524 to 146, their possessions looted (State Edicts of 7-10-1833 and 9-3-1934)).

³⁹² Protopresbyter Georgios Metallinos n.d.

³⁹³ Father John Romanides n.d. a.

It was extremely fortunate for Orthodoxy at the same time when Koraes' followers were in power that the Greek state did not extend to Mount Athos and the many monasteries within what was left of the Ottoman Empire. Otherwise, the imbecilities of Adamantios Koraes would have had an even more destructive effect on Roman Orthodoxy, now called Byzantine Orthodoxy, because of this same Adamantios Koraes who undertook to convince the inhabitants of Old Greece that they were not also Romans, but exclusively Greeks, who had allegedly forgotten their real national identity. The vision of Adamantios Koraes was to replace patristic spirituality, theology, and Roman nationality with Greek philosophy and nationalism as the basis of theology and political philosophy. It is perhaps not an accident that Napoleonic France revived such policies pertaining to East Romans which are similar to the Charlemagnian ones... Napoleon was, after all, a descendant from the Frankish nobility of Tuscany, established there since the time of Charlemagne³⁹⁴.

Commenting on Father John Romanides' perspective, Kitsikis writes:

In the end, as the Frankish Charlemagne in 800 AD was the greatest enemy of Romanity, similarly, the Frankish Napoleon as a new Charlemagne was the greatest enemy of Romanity too. In one of his letters dated 1801, [being an agent,] Korais assigns Napoleon the name Karaosmanoglou, i.e., Carolus Magnus, who will liberate Ionia and will destroy the throne of Byzantium [that the Ottomans hold]. Monasticism constituted the greatest handicap – says Romanides – against the plan for the Westernisation of Orthodoxy³⁹⁵.

Precisely as it had been formed by Crusius, the anti-Roman – and thus anti-Hellenic - fallen spirit leading 19th-century Western Philhellenism can be seen in the proselytising mania of the Papist Jesuits of Smyrna, whom even the monstrous Korais became apprehensive of – in approaching them he knew he was betraying his family Orthodox roots (especially, his grandfather, Adamantios Rysios):

In order to acquire a knowledge of Latin I had to approach Western priests established in Smyrna, and particularly the Jesuits; a difficult thing, on account of the prejudice against them, nourished indeed by their proselytising mania, a passion so strong that *the Jesuitical enemies of Christ considered and still consider today, the return of a Greek to their church, a much more rewarding work than to catechise ten Turks, or ten heathen*³⁹⁶.

³⁹⁴ Father John Romanides 1981b.

³⁹⁵ Kitsikis 2014, 340.

³⁹⁶ Korais in Clogg 1976, 122, emphasis ours.

In my view, Korais' psychosynthesis bears very much the conclusive-inconclusive half-ness found in that of Saint Augustine. Korais' Frankish-type of nationalism has been the prototype of modern Greek nationalism. Of course, in our days, having incorporated the country into the Frankish world, the West has largely dropped the Philhellenism mask; the carrot – which the Grequists willingly ate and served - has been replaced only by the stick – their anti-Turkish infusion though remains inalterable.

In the modern Greek chicken farm [(borrowing a term coined by Gerasimos Kaklamanis which corresponds to Kitsikis' Grequists)], a concept of patriotism thrives, according to which a patriot is anyone who considers the Turk to be an enemy by default. Some trumpet it, puffing up like turkeys stuffed with national pride. Some others – those more cunning ones - leave this pride nestling curled up inside them, while at the same time, they make pretentious appeals to sanity and reason, praising the so-called European values and consuming whatever expired canned food served to them by Brussels. Their common point? The discrediting of anyone who harbours friendly feelings towards the neighbouring country and its people³⁹⁷.

The overall anti-Roman stance was similarly present in the policies of Westernising Tsarist Russia during the 18th-19th century – after the Frankishisation thrust within Russian Orthodoxy which was initially enacted by the reforms of Peter I (known as the Great) (r. 1682 -1725 AD) that, in the end, left it a theologically unrecognizable hybrid based on Frankish Augustinianism (Catholicism, Protestantism) – until it was done away with by the Communist Revolution of 1917. Having lost all esoteric dimension based on excessive exoterism (bodily disciple) - save for 19th-century Optina (*оптина пустынь*) and Sarov (*саровский монастырь*); for example, the official proto-anti-Roman Russian attitude, present at least from the late 15th century onward, can be seen in the horrendous treatment of Saint Maximus/Maksim the Greek/the Hagiorite (c. 1475-1556 AD) (trials for heresy, imprisonments, torturing, accusations of spying for the Ottomans).

The Russian Church had dealt a blow to Orthodox spirituality and theology by condemning Maximos of Mount Athos and Trans-Volga elders in the sixteenth century. In other words, the Russian Church became something of a keeper of books on astronomy, biology, and medicine, but had gotten rid

³⁹⁷ “Οἱ Καλύτεροι Ἕλληνες εἶναι οἱ Τούρκοι (Δημήτρης Κιτσίκης) [The Best Greeks Are the Turks (Dimitris Kitsikis)]”. 2021. *Ἀρετὴ ΚΑΙ Τόλμη* (blog). Oct 15th, 2021. Accessed Sep 3rd, 2023. <http://katotokerdos.blogspot.com/2021/10/blog-post.html>.

of the telescopes, microscopes, and the scientists who used them. This made the Church ripe for Westernization under Peter the Great³⁹⁸.

In deep spiritual and social darkness, Russia was unfit to be ‘the Third Rome’ – let alone that Constantinople was very much alive spiritually after 1453.

What is of great interest is the role of the policies of the Frankish Peter the Great of Tsarist Russia on the de-Romanisation of the Ottoman Empire!!! As the famous Turkish historian of the Ottoman Empire, İlber Ortaylı has pointed out:

The Petrine reforms in Russia played an important role in introducing and accelerating military and administrative reforms in the Ottoman Empire. More important, however, was the mutual inter-connection between the official ideologies and the ideological apparatuses of the two empires which began to manifest itself towards the end of the eighteenth century... pan-Islamism was being resorted to as an ideology in a modern sense in opposition to pan-Slavism and pan-Orthodoxy [sic., pan-Orthodoxism (Frankisised Orthodoxy)]... The autocratic modernization drive of the Hamidian regime was woven of the same cloth as the Russian imperial system³⁹⁹.

In fact, the image of Peter the Great follows exactly the self-image of Ottoman de-Romanisation:

Conservative official Ottoman ideology changed within one century of Petrine Russian reforms. The death of Peter the Great was at the time recorded by Raşid, the official chronicler (*yakanüvis*) of the Ottoman State, in the following words: “The Muscovite Czar Peter being dead, his corpse left lying in some quite corner, he had tried to impose crazy new fashions on his people”... [a] change in attitude took place around the time of the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca. For nineteenth-century Ottoman thought and historiography, Peter was no longer, “The Mad” (Deli) but “The Great”⁴⁰⁰.

Indeed, the violently imposed Frankish ideologization of Russian Orthodoxy into Russian Orthodoxism (the monasteries were a main target marked for destruction by Peter I) ran parallel with development of the murderous replacement of the classical Roman Ottoman Islamic religiosity of *vahdet-i vücud* by the *vahdet-i şühûd* (unity of witnessing) Islamism (represented by the non-Turkish Indian *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye* and

³⁹⁸ Father John Romanides 1981b.

³⁹⁹ Ortaylı 2010, 226-228.

⁴⁰⁰ Ortaylı 2010, 228-229.

later, of its *Halidiyye* branch) reaching its peak in the reign of Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808-1839 AD). The *Francophone* and unconditionally Westernising *Tanzimat* statesman, Cevdet Paşa reserves great words of praise for Peter the Great, considering the two states as possessing the same political organisation, and focusing positively and uniquely on the most anti-Roman act of the Mahmudian regime, the destruction of the *Yeniçeris*⁴⁰¹ – which was concomitant with the banning of the *Bektaşiiyye*. It was no accident that the inherent anti-Hellenity/anti-Romanity of Westernism took root during the *Tanzimat* “when the Greek element in the Empire started to lose its former privilege status among other non-Muslim communities... Armenians, Jews and Maronites were favoured to the detriment of Greeks in officialdom”⁴⁰². The various Western neo-Gnostic Protestant-based missionary entities (Evangelicals, Baptists, etc.) of England and the United States played a key role in this. Politically, the missionary thrust came when Britain decided to block the Russians from making further gains against the Ottomans and falsely cultivated the hope of the possibility of establishing a British protectorate in the Eastern Ottoman Provinces among the Armenians in the 1880s.

The initial target of these missionaries was a conversion of the Jews of the Ottoman Empire to Christianity. The Jews resisted the missionaries. The Moslems were also mostly impervious to conversion and the mainstream Orthodox church refused to adopt Protestant doctrines: it was only the Armenian Christians that were susceptible... The Armenians had been thorough Orientals and had shared common habits and customs with the Turks and Kurds. But their protestantising by the missions spoilt them by making them discontented semi-Europeanised Asiatics⁴⁰³.

This was doctrinally expectable taking in account the proximity of neo-Gnostic Protestantism and Armenian Monophysism. As we will see, the Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople would gradually come to adopt religious positions subservient to the neo-Gnostic Protestant-based ‘Ecumenical Movement’ only after 1911 with key hierarchs actively submissive to the Western whims and bearing blind anti-Muslim/anti-Turkish sentiments.

The American teaching included commercial training and instruction in U.S. business methods and it helped to gather capital and wealth in the Armenian communities. This led to an increase in the economic disparity between

⁴⁰¹ Ortaylı 2010, 229-230.

⁴⁰² Ortaylı 2010, 41-42.

⁴⁰³ Walsh 2017, 140.

Moslem and Armenian and it became a source of resentment among the Kurds and Turks. It would also have made the Armenians more literate and educated, producing feelings of superiority. This superiority would have been emphasised by the versions of Christianity pedalled by the Protestant missions which suggested only the chosen few would be “saved” and the bulk of Ottoman society, even Catholic Armenians, damned⁴⁰⁴.

Moreover,

This missionary work, which the tolerant Ottomans unwisely permitted, helped break up the homogenous Armenian community and some other Christian traditions too. In this situation, nationalism gradually replaced religion as a cohesive force in the Armenian communities. The missionaries also engendered dissatisfaction with the existing Ottoman arrangements. The Christian missions had extra-territorial status, acted in conjunction with their own governments and under their protection, outside the normal Ottoman governing system. All these factors tended toward the development of Armenian communities that were antagonistic toward their neighbors and undermined the existing social relationships that had preserved peace and order for centuries. On another level the Protestant missions became producers and outlets for anti-Turk propaganda in Europe and the U.S. — something which also grated with the Ottoman Turks. Many of the missionaries used special diplomatic channels to pass information against the Ottomans. This depicted the Turks and Kurds as barbarous infidels, continually preying on innocent Armenian martyrs, along with ravishing Christian women... the missionaries helped translate Armenian revolutionary propaganda that encouraged a generation of insurrectionists imbibed with hatred of Moslems⁴⁰⁵.

When the Greek Kingdom passed under the total control of the Western Imperial powers in 1831, the original Roman character of the 1821 Hellenic Revolution was lost — certainly at the elite level - with the introduction of a Western-type ‘nationalism’ and attempts to impose Catholic and Protestant-derived norms (even in the Greek Orthodox Church). Rigas Velenstinlis’ original Revolution of a Roman Greco-Turkish character was hijacked and twisted to fit into the neo-Greek *Megali Idea* by the leader of “the French Party” (literally) of Greece, PM Ioannis Kolettis – not the Hellenity of Romanity but, essentially its cacopathy at the minds of the Franks. And in this, it was destined to fail amidst the Roman people of the Empire. The source of the *Megali Idea* was not Roman Hellenity but the Frankish tradition of the concept of Greekness of Charlemagne based on Uniate-ism (the

⁴⁰⁴ Walsh 2017, 140.

⁴⁰⁵ Walsh 2017, 141.

religion of 'the last Byzantine Emperor', Constantine Dragasis Palaiologos): "This idea was nothing else but Uniate-ism, the Catholic Union, which Kolettis simply renamed as such in his well-known speech to the National Assembly" in 1844 when even the pro-British Greek newspaper, *Αθηνά* (Athena) wrote of "Treachery against Orthodoxy"⁴⁰⁶.

[The opposition between Romanity] and the Westernist party of Korais, of the *Megali Idea*, the inventor of which was Kolettis, had as its main aim, under the pretention of reinstituting the Byzantine Empire (although the Byzantine had not ceased to exist due to the Ottoman [Empire] and the Phanariotes), to destroy the ecumenicity of Constantinople in order to surrender the territories of the Empire to the English and the French⁴⁰⁷.

One must take its historical development to understand the religious-political inter-encapsulation at the centre of the Frankish Catholic *Megali Idea*. After the Council of Trend (1542-1564 AD) and to compensate for its losses to Protestantism, the Catholics turned their eyes to converting Ottoman Orthodox Christians. In the 17th century, the attack involved the collaboration of the Papacy, the Jesuits and the French King (not always in harmony with one another). "By the eighteenth century, the resentment of various members of the higher clergy of the Eastern Church towards the Catholics was becoming more apparent. This coincided with a time of the transformation of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the institutionalization of the Orthodox Patriarchates, on a par with the social and economic context of the Empire at the time"⁴⁰⁸. Elif Bayraktar-Tellan's study, *The Clash of 'Rum' and 'Frenk': Orthodox-Catholic Interactions on the Aegean Islands in the mid-seventeenth to mid-eighteenth centuries and their Impact in the Ottoman Capital*, is telling. Even during the Ottoman de-Romanisation period, there was increased cooperation between the Ottoman administration and the Orthodox Patriarchates, albeit in a new religious-political environment.

The patriarchs and the clergy under their jurisdiction were enabled to protect the Orthodox community against those religious practices found to be in opposition to the Orthodox rite, most probably under the influence of the Catholics... The Ottoman administration expected the patriarch to control his community effectively in the new conditions of the society. Overall, such articles aim[ed] at strengthening the patriarch against Catholic missionaries by giving him extensive rights to control the Orthodox hierarchy⁴⁰⁹.

⁴⁰⁶ Malatas 2003, 79.

⁴⁰⁷ Kitsikis 2014, 350.

⁴⁰⁸ Çolak and Bayraktar-Tellan 2019, 43.

⁴⁰⁹ Çolak and Bayraktar-Tellan 2019, 50-51.

Of course, these “new conditions” were in tandem with increased Ottoman state/religious (*Şeyhülislâm*) centralisation under the *şariat-ist* religious auspices of the oriental *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye*. After the Roman Revolution of Rigas was violently brought to an end by the Austro-Hungarian Franks and the de-Romanising Ottomans, and the Greek Revolution of 1821 was highjacked by the West after 1832, the *Megali Idea* of the leader of the “French Party” of Greece, PM Kolettis, constituted a new phase of this attack on Romanity using nationalism under the Frankish dictum, ‘sell your faith of Christ and Romanity, gain land and money’. The instruments used were, religiously, the autocephalous Church of Greece, and politically, the *Megali Idea* and the imposition of nationalism *ala* Korais. According to the latter, the Romans who had fought in the 1821 Revolution could be considered Greeks only on the condition that they would migrate to the Frankish-controlled new Greece.

[The Romans who remained outside the neo-Greece] were rather scandalized by the fact that followers of Korais worked fanatically to pull the nails out of and dissolve Romanism and to separate the self-created new Church of Hellas from the Ecumenical Patriarchate, as though it were not right for Hellenes to belong to a Roman Patriarch... the Great Powers imposed the Graeco-Frankish line of Adamantios Korais and gave the death blow to the Roman line of Regas of Velestino⁴¹⁰.

This *modus operandi* would continue after 1911 when the violent Western relay race against Orthodox Christianity would be carried on by the reformed Protestant/neo-Gnostic Ecumenism of the British Liberals, who would soon turn the world into a slaughterhouse. After WWII, the ouroborian US religious ecumenism has been coiling itself around the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople together with political-financial dependence. The catastrophic consequences of the Frankish-derived nationalist, and inherently anti-Turkish, neo-Greek *Megali Idea* for the Roman Hellenes would become abundantly clear during its clash with the Roman national Turkish ideal between 1919-1922, a clash which nevertheless would later provide for its rectification into a common national-based Romanity – yet, for both these Roman nations, only until Atatürk died in 1938.

The issue here is that, due to the Romanness of the Ottoman Greeks and, in reality, of the Ottoman Empire, predominantly up to the mid-18th century, the Frankish method of conquering through the creation of a local Frankishised elite did not work in Greece until after the Greek civil war of

⁴¹⁰ Romanides 1978.

the late 1940s – a war instigated by Franks (Western Imperialist Capitalists and Soviet Communists) and their local representatives respectively. This war practically decimated the most remarkable Roman part of the Greek people. It is from this perspective that Romanides argues that the neo-Greek Hellenic Revolution of,

...1821 marked the beginning of the end of the work of Alexander the Great and of Constantine the Great, and so it already entered the stage of its almost total extinction⁴¹¹.

In reality, the 'beginning of the end' was initiated from around 1750 by the de-Romanising Ottomans (via Frankish Petrine Russian influence and difficulties from English-created Islamist Wahabism), against whom the original Roman Hellenes of 1821 rightly revolted as well as by de-Romanising Frankish-minded neo-Greeks (such as Adamantios Korais).

The destruction of the Patristic Tradition and Romanity that its aforementioned conquerors had not realised was accomplished to a large degree by the overlord states of the Neohellenism [(the West and Tsarist Russia)] by way of Korais-ism. For centuries, the Franks knew the hesychia-based spine cord of Romanity, and it is that which they had aimed to uproot⁴¹².

Yet,

The capstone of the neo-Greek betrayal of the hesychastic foundations of the Patristic Tradition was the proposal of the Church of Greece to the Pan-orthodox Conference of the Holy Mountain **sic** in 1930 for the replacement of traditional monasticism with that of the western type⁴¹³.

One should not forget how prominently Romanity (*Ρωμ(α)ιοσύνη* (*Romiosyne*)) featured in the consciousness of the vast majority of the modern Greeks well into the 20th century. The prominent poet, Kostis Palamas (1859-1943 AD) stated in response to the tide of doctrinal, essentially Carolingian-type, 'ancient Greekisation' and 'anti-Byzantinism' that originated in Western Europe:

We also follow comparable logic in the use of the terms Roman and Romanity. The only difference is that these two words were gradually set aside from the official language, as were also all the words of life and truth

⁴¹¹ Father John Romanides 2002, 70.

⁴¹² Father John Romanides 1991, 29.

⁴¹³ Father John Romanides 1991, 14, emphasis in original.

which are difficult to measure, because they did not come to us directly from the age of Pericles. We are Greeks so that we hoodwink the world, but in reality, Romans... The life and reality of the word Roman is unquestionably demonstrated by the fact that this name came to us readily at hand in the most sincere and luminous state of our soul – at the point of us gaining consciousness of our fall – and in order to herald this fall, more so than the festive and cumbersome name Greek, and even than the name Greek, which is somewhat more difficult to take root [among us] than the name Roman, and which until yesterday preserved even its ancient idolatrous meaning ...⁴¹⁴.

The Frankish-style reclusiveness of what Dimitri Kitsikis describes as the phenomenon of Kolonakiotes, a Westernised local Greek elite of the Kolonaki suburb of Athens who ruled in Greece after WWII, is characteristic of the ideology of the time. For that matter, it took another 40 years, Frankish Globalisation and a German EU membership for the Westernization process to disastrously drip down to the popular level and all sectors of Greek society.

The vitriolic fantasies of medieval Frankish historiography continued relentlessly, albeit in a modern form, by way of the Frankish Enlightenment (including the racial aspects of its various nationalisms) - imported into the various histories of the newly Frankish-controlled nations in a convoluted ‘true-false’ format (essentially by injecting new yet distorted meaning into old historical events, unwarrantedly privileging some and marginalising others, etc.) in order to fit the overarching Enlightenment precepts: old wine, new flasks. A typical example of the late 19th–early 20th-century Western perception of Byzantine moral philosophy and society is found in Lecky’s *History of European Morals*. As if from Charlemagne himself,

*The Byzantine Empire was pre-eminently the age of treachery. Its vices were the vices of men who had ceased to be brave without learning to be virtuous...*⁴¹⁵.

Indeed, the Frankish Enlightenment modernists projected upon their Roman Christian counterparts historical characteristics found in the Frankish Medieval Churches. And not only to Christian milieus for that matter as a mere substitution of the term ‘Byzantine’ for ‘Ottoman’ in most of the above text would more or less produce the predominantly modern

⁴¹⁴ Palamas, Kostis, *Ρωμικός και Ρωμιοσύνη* (Roman and Romanity), Apanta, Vol VI, 273-281, *Ίδρυμα Κωστή Παλαμά, Μπίρης*, Athens [in Father John Romanides 1978].

⁴¹⁵ Lecky 1911 (Vol. II), 12-14.

Western image of the Ottoman Empire, ranging from its 'religious ignorance and fanaticism' to its 'amorous sensuality' (the *harem* and its eunuchs), *via*, of course, a web of cruelty and machinations. It is no accident that the renowned Ottomanist, Halil İnalcık was compelled to write his article, *Harem Bir Fuhuş Yuvası değil, Bir Okuldu* (Harem was not a Nest of Prostitution but an Educational Institution).

And all this is not some sort of practical exercise in Roman imperialism since true love excludes all kinds of tyranny. As Romanides states:

Although the Roman has absolute confidence in his/her Romanity, he/she is neither fanatical nor does he/she hate others for holding different beliefs than himself/herself, *μισαλλόδοξος*], and he/she bears no xenophobia. On the contrary, he/she loves all foreigners yet not naively. This is so because he/she knows that God loves all humans, all races and all nations without discrimination and without preference. The Roman knows that his/her Romanity possesses the truth and is the highest form of civilisation. But he/she comprehends fully the fact that God loves the Roman but not more than the rest. God loves the possessor of the truth but he equally loves the herald of falsity. He loves the saint, but He also equally loves even the devil himself [comment: without this meaning that all will be saved. For as we have seen with the case of Christ and the Nicolaitans, God knows all His Creatures but hates the works of the impious, i.e. their spiritual, intelligible and bodily state and actions]... The heroism of Romanity is true and a constant state of the spirit, it is neither savageness nor barbarity nor rapaciousness⁴¹⁶.

Ontologically, *ala Franca* nationalism that ultimately introduced a division between the New and the Old Testaments – the latter's portrayed to be merely the national history of the Jews – serves the aims of those striving to destroy the Person of the Ecumenical Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, replacing Him with a global Messiah yet liberator of a specific people, i.e., replacing Christ with the antichrist.

The Germans especially and the Europeans generally have a tribal and racist understanding concerning nations which during the middle ages took the form of class distinctions between the Frankish and Norman conquerors who were supposed to be noble by nature of birth and the conquered serfs who were supposed to be serfs by nature of birth. After the French revolution this concept concerning nations took the form of that tribal ethnicism which tends to identify each nation with one language. Thus the Europeans imagine the ancient Romans as a Latin speaking race which became the class of noble governors and the Greeks-speaking race which became the class of serfs or

⁴¹⁶ Father John Romanides 2002, 13.

the conquered. When the Latins govern, the empire is Roman, but in reality it is Greek or Byzantine. The “Neo-Greeks” introduced exactly such a racist understanding of nationality into the realm of Romanism and thus identified each language with a separate nation, so that the Great Powers would be able to replace the Ottoman Empire, not with the Romanism of Regas of Velestino, but with small sickly statelings, slaves of these Great Powers⁴¹⁷.

As we will see, this is in complete opposition to the Atatürkist notion of nationalism.

1912-1922: The Final Push of Frankism to Wipe Romanity off the Face of the Earth from within

To really understand what the Franks had in store for Romanity in the early twentieth century, one should look at a phenomenon that peaked globally in the modern era, neo-Gnosticism, and more precisely Protestantism. Discussing adherence to notions of strong rulership and governance in relation to “a theologically understood notion of original sin conflated with an ethnologically understood notion of original freedom”⁴¹⁸, Reuter aptly notes that “up to a point, the conceptual equipment and mentalities of a medieval writer coincide with those of the modern historian, and special attention is therefore needed”⁴¹⁹. Note here two things: the endemic ‘vs.-relationship’ between religion and ethnos/nation which is taken for granted in the Western case; and, what is unrecognised here is that the understanding of the original sin is perceived in its Augustinian iteration— itself an ‘innovation’ against the precepts of Roman Apostolic Christianity. Later on we will see the crucial role this plays in the trajectory of Western thought.

Anything organically connected with Augustinian theology bears the seal of Gnostic Manichaeism - particularly by way of an innerly trapping antithesis. Although the *telos* of his inquiry is unlimitedly separate from the roots of Christianity, Philip J. Lee correctly points out in his important and pioneering expose of the Gnostic roots and the character of American Protestantism, *Against the Protestant Gnostics*:

The problem seems to have stemmed from the old Calvinistic (initially Augustinian) doctrine of Original Sin. We have seen how St. Augustine in his polemic against the Manichaeans might himself have fallen into a gnostic

⁴¹⁷ Father John Romanides 1978.

⁴¹⁸ Reuter 1996, 49.

⁴¹⁹ Reuter 1996, 49.

trap. His interpretation ... left the [Western (Frankish)] Church with a theological formulation too close to Gnosticism for comfort⁴²⁰

- or, more accurately, the problem stems also from the doctrine of the Original Sin as understood by Saint Augustine. We can see that Lee's *telos* of inquiry is aeons apart from the Christian roots which is *Supraness* – which is unfathomable for any Western religiosity.

Although I have appreciated all critics—both friendly and unfriendly—who have joined my discussion of Protestant gnosticism, I cannot accept the charge that my argument has been overstated. In fact, I believe that five years ago I underestimated the gnostic threat. I did not imagine in 1987 that the over-spiritualization of American life would make such rapid gains. When I wrote of American Protestant elitism that the “gnostic misunderstanding of divine election as an immutable separation between real men and animal-like people . . . [has] opened the door for every sort of atrocity by the chosen few against the unchosen many,” I did not believe that American attacks on Third World peoples would escalate so rapidly. When I surmised that “it is doubtful that America can be led out of the psychological malaise of Vietnam or enabled to avoid future Vietnams until Protestant elitism has been overcome,” I did not foresee such immediate atrocities as those inflicted on Grenada, Panama, and Iraq. These and other social and political developments have gone beyond my darkest vision⁴²¹.

The psychotic neo-Gnostic all-out global attacks by Liberal-minded/Liberals of the United States against Russian via the instrumentalisation of Ukraine is a current case in point. It is exactly that same menace that Liberal Britain unleashed upon the Roman people of the Ottoman Empire, when in 1907 there was a particularly frivolous yet sudden shift of policy focus from Frankish Tsarist Russia to Germany. Written during the First Balkan War, the 1913 geopolitical analysis of Sir Roger Casement foresaw how this shift would lead to a great European War (WW I) that would culminate in an assault on Istanbul and the Anatolian peoples. A Neo-Gnostic Manichean worldview was present in the nonconformist Protestant Liberals – Venizelos' pal, Liberal Prime Minister David Lloyd George, assiduously cultivated Nonconformist support. In his article, “The Balkans Detonator – The Balkan Wars as preludes to the Greater War”, Pat Walsh writes:

Casement placed the Balkan War in the context of Britain's attempts to stop German commercial expansion into the Ottoman Empire, by utilising the

⁴²⁰ Lee 1993, 86.

⁴²¹ Lee 1993, xi-xii.

nationalist impulses of the Christian Balkan countries against the Turks. He saw the result of the war and the expulsion of the Ottomans from most of South-Eastern Europe, as having placed a barrier, once and for all, in the way of German activity in the Near/Middle East – or “The Near West,” as he called it. He believed that this should have satisfied British fears of a German ‘colonisation’ of the region, but reasoned that, knowing Britain, it would not satisfy her. *Britain*, argued Casement, *would only be satisfied with the total destruction of Germany as a commercial and maritime rival*. He concluded, therefore, that *the Balkan war was merely the first stage in a process that would result in an offensive against Istanbul and Anatolia*⁴²².

What is most important for us Romans is this:

Sir Roger Casement’s view is significant because in many respects he was an insider and someone who understood the thrust and workings of British Imperial policy intimately... Casement’s article also draws attention to the new ‘ethical’ basis of foreign policy held by the Liberal Government in England, which had a strong Christian ‘moral’ dimension. He noted how the joining together of the Christian states and the expelling of the Ottomans from Europe was seen in Nonconformist English Liberal circles as a ‘divine judgement’: “This happy consummation... has fallen from heaven, and Turkey is being cut up for the further extension of British interests clearly by the act of God. *The victory of the Balkan States becomes another triumph for the British Bible*; it is the victory of righteousness over wrong-doing.” (p.103)... Casement, however, did not see this moral Christian impulse as the driving force of Imperial policy but as a kind of ethical veneer on the core values of British policy in exerting its power against potential competitors. He saw the Balkan Christians as mere pawns in Imperial power politics and wrote: “The true virtue of the Balkan ‘Christians’ lies in the possibility of their being moulded into an anti-German factor of great weight in the European conflict, clearly impending, and in their offering a fresh obstacle, it is hoped, to German world policy... Hemmed in by Russia on the East and the new Southern Slav States on the South-east, with a vengeful France being incited on her Western frontier to fresh dreams of conquest, Germany sees England preparing still mightier armaments to hold and close the seaways of the world...” (p.104)⁴²³.

Indeed,

Casement’s analysis is confirmed by British Imperialist activity from 1912 onwards and particularly in its repeated attempts to enlist all these Christian Slav States as fighting forces against Germany, Austro-Hungary and

⁴²² Walsh 2014.

⁴²³ Walsh 2014.

Ottoman Turkey. It is particularly accurate in relation to the Greek State. This activity led to British military interference in Greek neutrality and the Greek tragedy in Anatolia after the government under Venizélos, installed in Athens through Allied force, was enlisted as a 'cat paw' to bring the Turks to accept the Treaty of Sèvres⁴²⁴.

In 1916, King Constantine of Greece, who in British eyes was a German pawn, understood the need for neutrality for such a small and precarious state like the Greek Kingdom. In his 1922 book, *Greece and the Allies 1914-1922*, G. F. Abbott writes:

The King's standpoint was shared by most Greek statesmen and soldiers of note: they all, in varying degrees, stood for neutrality, with possible intervention on the side of the Entente at some favourable moment. But it did not commend itself to his Premier. Caution was foreign to M. Venizelos's ambitious and adventurous temperament. Military considerations had little meaning for his civilian mind. Taking the speedy victory of the Entente as a foregone conclusion, and *imbued with a sort of mystical faith in his own prophetic insight and star*, he looked upon the European War as an occasion for Imperialist aggrandizement which he felt that Greece ought to grasp without an instant's delay⁴²⁵.

If the reference to Venizelos' mystical faith is accidental, it is informedly accidental.

From the mid-18th onwards, Romanity, i.e., Orthodox Christianity and Turkish Islam, was impacted by the development of Islamism within the Ottoman Empire, as well as from the missionary activity of the Protestant conglomerate in the Empire, but especially through the official anti-Orthodox legitimization of Frankish religiosities by the Ba(r)barian-led Ottoman Kingdom of Greece. In his concisely informative book, *The Missionary Origins of Modern Ecumenism Milestones Leading up to 1920*, Father Peter Heers identifies "Five Miles Stones" in the development of the modern Ecumenical Movement, at the heart of which lies Evangelical Protestantism – and thus, in our view, neo-Gnosticism resides in the heart of its heart:

1. Milestone One: The Protestant Missionary Movement of the 19th Century
2. Milestone Two: The Evangelical Ecclesiology: The Invisible Church Milestone

⁴²⁴ Walsh 2014.

⁴²⁵ Abbott 1922, 7-8.

3. Milestone Three: The Y.M.C.A and Student Christian Movements: The Inspiration of the Ecumenical Generation

4. Milestone Four: Edinburgh 1910: The Cradle of Modern Ecumenism

5. Milestone Five: Widening the Notion of the Church: The 1920 Encyclical and Early Orthodox Participation.

“A “new thing” had appeared in Christian history: an invisible “church” simultaneously within and above the churches”⁴²⁶. “But there is one more step that the Protestant world must take before more Orthodox will join their “unity in fellowship”: the First World Mission Conference in Edinburgh”⁴²⁷ “[B]y the eve of the Edinburgh conference in 1910 such early Orthodox ecumenical enthusiasts as Metropolitan Germanos Strenopoulos [Metropolitan of Thyateira and Exarch of Western Europe for the Ecumenical Patriarchate], were prepared to take their place at the table of the modern ecumenical movement”⁴²⁸. “At Edinburgh the walls of doctrine began to fall and in their place were erected the belief that differences would be transcended without being surrendered. After Edinburgh, however, the Orthodox would soon enter the scene and be forced to work within such a framework and mindset that did not allow for Orthodox ecclesiological presuppositions”⁴²⁹. The 1920 Encyclical of the Ecumenical Patriarchate at Constantinople composed in the midst of the Greek Campaign in Anatolia “is the cornerstone of the ecumenical policy of the Patriarchate and the key point of synchronization with the developing “ecumenical ecclesiology” of the Protestants”⁴³⁰. The Encyclical grew out of the “the “epoch-making” Constantinople assembly of the W.C.S.F. in 1911, where Metropolitan Germanos encountered the fresh enthusiasm of the Edinburgh conference in such men as John Mott, Swedish Archbishop Nathan Söderblom and other pioneers of the ecumenical movement”⁴³¹.

Why are all these events terribly vital? Up to about that time, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople remained a sacrificial and brave bastion of Christ fighting against the neo-Frankish perennial threat – even at times when the Church of Greece in Captivity suffered under the Ottoman yoke. A milestone in this fight, as Metropolitan Hierotheos (Vlachos) notes, is the Patriarchal Encyclical of 1848 where the terms used against the

⁴²⁶ Father Peter Heers 2007 (Kindle Locations 165-166).

⁴²⁷ Father Peter Heers 2007 (Kindle Locations 234-235).

⁴²⁸ Father Peter Heers 2007 (Kindle Locations 218-220).

⁴²⁹ Father Peter Heers 2007 (Kindle Locations 275-277).

⁴³⁰ Father Peter Heers 2007 (Kindle Locations 302-303).

⁴³¹ Father Peter Heers 2007 (Kindle Locations 284-286).

Frankish attack include: "wolf-minded men", "soul-catchers" "words of fraud and madness", etc⁴³².

After the assassination of the Roman governor, Ioannis Kapodistrias and the terminal failure in the establishment of a Roman state based on the principle of Empire, the [Western/Russian] imposition of xenocracy [(a semblance of indigenous but in reality foreign rule)] from the epoch of Bavarian rule of 1832 down to the German Simitocracy of 1996 [(rule of the PM Kostas Simitis), after 2010 the German Simitocracy was exchanged for an Atlanticist one] brought the Greco-Orthodox Church to a cul-de-sack, especially after the violent separation from the Mother Ecclesia of Constantinople that was imposed upon her in 1833. This will to cleanse *the Intermediate Region* from the Turkish and generally from the Eastern abominations... [including the language reforms of Korais, Georgios Rallis and Andreas Papandreou]... with the aim of establishing a Western Greek state upon rationalism, went hand-in-hand with the efforts of England – supported by France – to stop Russia, which was an Eastern Empire to become the heir of the Ottoman Empire... The crisis between Athens and Constantinople ended with the defeat of the Patriarchate, which was forced to retreat and recognise the independence of the Church of Athens⁴³³.

At the turn of the 20th century, it was the time for the Patriarchal fall; a fall that would soon encompass - via Venizelos - even Greece itself and which coincided with the Balkan Wars of 1912. As for the mechanics of the fall, they were simple: "*Give me your soul, and I will give you the world*" – the political origins of which are found in the mid-13th century and particularly around 1453, echoing the corresponding tempting of the Lord Jesus Christ by satan in the desert:

Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours." And Jesus answered and said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, '*You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.*'"⁴³⁴

The key personality in all these was the Freemason Meletius (Metaxakis, 1871-1935 AD), Archbishop of Athens and all Greece (1918-1920 AD), Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople (1921-1923 AD) and Archbishop

⁴³² Metropolitan Hierotheos (Vlachos) 2016, 434.

⁴³³ Kitsikis 2014, 246-247.

⁴³⁴ Luke 4:5-8.

of Athens and All Greece Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria (1926-1935 AD). Notice how the destruction of Orthodoxy went hands in hand with the neo-Gnosticisation and Protestantisation that played out under the dictatorship of Venizelos. A letter of his Minister, Andreas Michalakopoulos, on November 10/23, 1916 reads:

Mr. President, I told you a long time ago in the Council of Ministers that after we had brought to a successful conclusion the national struggle ... for you to take care of another, equally important, struggle, that of modernizing our religious affairs.... To head this truly revolutionary reform, you will need a far-seeing hierarch, one almost like you in politics. You have one: We are talking of the Hierarch from Cyprus [Meletios Metaxakis]. Under your guidance, he will become the Venizelos of the Church of Greece. What are the elements that will require reform (once the political revolution has removed Archbishop Prokopios of Athens and those like him) in intellectual and monastic circles, when there will have been put in place an ecclesiastical Hierarchy and a universal or perhaps only a Greek Synod...? 1) Abolition of the Fasts... 2) Modernization of the different ceremonies and Liturgies... 3) ...The Priests... being educated at special schools... 4) We will abolish the different Feasts of Saint Athanasios, Saint Andrew, and so on and so forth, which are nothing but an excuse for idleness... Obviously, it is not possible (unfortunately) to make the idea of holiness disappear.... One time there fell into my hands a French book, which my taste for reading made me read, the title of which was Preacher's Panorama; a large tome.... We will publish a book of this type, fruit of the collaboration of good Church and lay writers. *And the word 'holy' will disappear...* 5) *The monasteries, the source of all corruption and of all the abuses of fortune and morals, will be abolished. Their lands will pass into the hands of the peasants...* They will tell you, Mr. President, that putting such an undertaking into effect is an arduous thing; that the people will revolt against new Iconoclasts; that a revolution will rise up against the impious. Nothing of that kind will happen, from the moment that your own prestige increases... *If the Entente [powers], as we are all convinced, dictates the conditions of peace, then England will offer at least Cyprus to Venizelos, as the incarnation of Greece.... And if we succeed on the national level, then the other purge, the interior purge, will follow, and no one will be capable of provoking any troubles. ...* The ecclesiastical Hierarchy that we will train to prepare the reform will have to respond to the need for regulating our religious affairs, following the abolition of the Turkish state and the reduction of the area where the Ecumenical Patriarchate exercises its jurisdiction.... The struggle which was recently waged in France was no less than the one we foresee here.... Yours, Andreas Michalakopoulos⁴³⁵.

⁴³⁵ Kitsikis 1995, 9-11, quoting from "[D. Gatopoulos, Andreas Michalakopos, 1875-1938, Athens, Elevtheroudakis, 1947, 90-93".

Indeed,

This Memorandum is seismic since it originates from the right hand of Eleutherios Venizelos. It reveals most plainly that Westernism consciously seeks the death of Orthodoxy. The five points of Michalopoulos' proposals have one and only purpose: the Greek must not live-out Orthodoxy: abolishing of fasting, mystagogies/liturgies, the Saints and the Monasteries! He swears at the monasteries as being the hearths of every kind of corruption, and at the same time, he clearly hails the blaspheming of things holy by the people. In their place, he offers the Greeks the material joys of capitalism: profit, good food, property and savings. All these together of course with capitalism (and) exploitation – not official holidays and laziness –, the reduction of the Church to utter slavery that will be used from then on as a centre for political propaganda in the service of political/state authority. To succeed in his plan, he means to use the fanaticism of the newly Western-imported nationalism in the hope that the Western patron/pimp will offer us [new] lands, while, the native nationalists, being them shrinkers of [ecumenical] Hellenism, will rejoice upon “the reduction of the areas of the Ecumenical Patriarchate”. The attack that Prime Minister Kostas Simitis with the Minister of Justice, Michalis Stathopoulos effected against the Church in the spring of 2000 was organized exactly in the same spirit as that of the Venizelists of 1916. The key characteristics of the attack were Masonic ideology and Western modernization⁴³⁶.

Now see how the *Oikonomia* Divine Will works:

Nevertheless, immediately after the election of Meletios Metaxakis on the Patriarchal Throne [in Constantinople] in December 1921 [at the height of the Greek-Turkish War in Anatolia], the Kemalist Government changed its cautious stance [on the issue of the creation of a Turkish-Orthodox Church in Cappadocia]. This election constituted the peak of the tensions between Ankara and Phanar[, the seat of the Istanbul Patriarchate]. Seeing Metaxakis as the religious version of Venizelos, the Kemalist government considered his choice a serious provocation and reacted immediately, ordering the Prefects in Asia Minor to forbid the priests there to commemorate the name of the new Patriarch in the churches. Refusing to obey that prohibition was considered an act of high treason. Moreover, the politicisation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and especially the conflict between the Venizelist leadership at Phanar [in Constantinople] and the Government of King Constantine in Athens had already seriously undermined the authority of the Patriarchate in the Turkish-held Cappadocia⁴³⁷.

⁴³⁶ Kitsikis 2007, 123-124.

⁴³⁷ Alexandris 1983, 179-180.

Thus, partly unconsciously, the Kemalists were fighting the most ardent and perilous enemy of the Lord Jesus Christ and Christianity: Gnosticism – and indeed, in a most deleterious version of it: New Age Neo-Gnosticism. I say partly because, apart from unconditional Westernising secular influences, they had already been religiously fighting neo-Gnosticism in the form of Ottoman/Turkish Islamism that sought to deform and destroy Ottoman/Turkish Islam.

And a bitter taste is the Will according to His receding allowance (*παράχωρησις/parachorisis*); in The Apocalypse/Uncovering, the Lord Jesus Christ warns the Bishop of Ephesus:

To the angel of the church of Ephesus write... “I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary. Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate...”⁴³⁸

In 1922, Ephesus as such was not, it was only its approximation, Smyrna; Smyrna 1922 AD and neo-Nicolaitans, i.e., neo-Gnostics; Exegetes the great Archimandrite Athanasios Mytilinaios:

The bishop of Ephesus worked extensively to cleanse the Church of evildoers and especially of heretical teachers. Somehow, the anti-heretical struggle became the focus, the main preoccupation, of the church of Ephesus and in the process something was overlooked... What is needed is something that was lacking in the bishop and the church of Ephesus, the necessary ascent of the loving heart towards God... So, both of these are necessary – spiritual life and active involvement in the church... When He says, *I will remove your lampstand*, He means He will physically take it and move it elsewhere. The removal of the lampstand means to become separated of divine grace, according to Saint Andrew, to become bare, naked of God’s [uncreated] grace⁴³⁹... The removal of the lampstand can also mean the extinction of a relevant church, a reality that found its fulfilment in our century after one thousand nine hundred years of history for the seven churches in Asia Minor. These churches were indefinitely uprooted from the geographical space that they had occupied for one thousand nine hundred years. This particular threat from the Lord found its fulfilment in 1922, when

⁴³⁸ The Apocalypse/Unveiling 2:1-6.

⁴³⁹ “Saint Andrew of Caesarea, (PG V 106, 233A): «ἡ τῆς θείας χάριτος γύμνωσις»”.

the seven churches were erased from the face of the earth. Where is the church of Smyrna? Where are the churches of Ephesus and Thyatira – blossoming churches, beautiful churches? When they were established these were the most beautiful churches and not a single one of the seven exists today. This threat, *or else I will remove your lampstand*, has become a reality. There is also a third type of movement of a lampstand, by which a church is not physically destroyed... Some other churches that have lost their orthodoxy through the centuries are the Coptic and Armenian's in the East, and Rome in the West. What is Rome? What are the Protestants? To stay in your place as a church and to lose your orthodoxy and *orthopraxis*, is, I believe, the worst of all three kinds of lampstand removals. This type of removal does not exclude any Church that emulates the church of Ephesus. Let's not think that the lampstand of the Greek Orthodox Christian Church, the local Greek church (and we have historical evidence regarding this) is exempt from this removal. ... This could occur because all of us, the clergy and the laity, are itching to change and modify the very character of our Orthodox Church⁴⁴⁰.

Ecumenical Romanity would judge the *1922 Turkish War of Independence* or the *Greek Asia Minor Campaign* as both a foreign and a civil war. At the elite level, it was certainly the former in which the Roman Turkish elite fought an anti-Imperialistic battle against both a Frankish and a Frankish-indoctrinated Greek enemy. However, at the popular level, it was a very bloody war in which Roman fought against Roman, Hellene against Turk, a conflict which left deep scars in both⁴⁴¹:

[On the early hours of August 30th, 1922, while strolling the battlefield which was littered with thousands of corpses of Hellene soldiers, and dead animals, Mustafa Kemal became highly emotional. Then he said]: 'This terrible scene can make humanity/humanness feel ashamed. We were forced to act like this for the legitimate defence of the *patrie*. Yet the Turks would not have done the same thing to the country of another nation. And seeing a Hellenic flag on the ground among the cannons, [he ordered gesturing]: "This is the symbol of the independence of a nation. Even if it had belonged to the enemy, it deserves respect. Lift it off the ground and place it upon a cannon"⁴⁴².

The bravery and self-sacrifice of the Roman Hellene soldiers was such that their fellow Roman Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish Army genuinely

⁴⁴⁰ Archimandrite Athanasios Mitilinaios 2016/2021 (Lesson 10, Revelation 2:4-7, January 11, 1981).

⁴⁴¹ On the monstrous atrocities committed by both sides, see, for example, Toynbee 1922 and 1926.

⁴⁴² Soyak 2004, 135.

expressed his admiration to the Hellene Prime Minister Venizelos in the early 1930s:

I have seen many Armies. I consider yours the greatest of them all. I fully appreciated the Hellenic Army, its bravery, its stamina. In order to do what it had done and to endure all it had endured, i.e., to come find and attack us in the heart of Anatolia, was a great feat. Irrespectively of whether it disintegrated afterwards and lost due to bad command. I appreciated and I admired your Army⁴⁴³.

Venizelos continued:

I was very much moved by his words. Afterwards, I mentioned it to Ismet (Inonu). And Ismet said to me: ‘Do not think that Kemal said all these out of courtesy. In all of the reports of the (Turkish) General Staff in which he mentions the Greek Army, he points out that it is a great army⁴⁴⁴.

The same was true for the Roman Turkish leadership and the Roman Turkish people of Anatolia which was not only fighting Romans commanded by a neo-Frankish-dominated-mentality Greek elite, but, at the same time, Franks and their local non-Roman allies all over Anatolia. The greatness of the Roman Kemalist leadership lay not only in the preservation of Romanity in Islam and Islam in the Roman ecumene, by defeating the foreign Imperial powers and its allies, but also in that after that victory it sincerely strived for the unification of the Turco-Hellene Islamic-Christian core Roman lands in the 1930-1933 Helleno-Turkish Confederation plans of Atatürk and Venizelos: the last version of the Roman *Megali Idea* of the Roman Modernists from Rigas, to the first Hellene Prime Minister Ioannis Kapodistrias, to the Roman Greek General Giannis Makrigiannis, to Namık Kemal and Kleanthis Skalieris, Tevfik Fikret, the Young Turks (up to 1912), Ziya Gökalp, Athanasios Souliotis and Ion Dragoumis, to Atatürk. In fact, Atatürk was fully aware that, in truth, it was not Roman Hellenes who he really had fought against in the War of Independence, but neo-Frankish Imperialism and its local Grequist allies.

Indeed, there had existed a number of Roman ‘Byzantine’-Ottoman unified modernisation proposals during the mid-19th century. As Fabio L. Grassi writes – referring also to İlber Ortaylı’s relevant works:

The empire was in one of those situations in which presumably extreme audacity is the sole realism. Here I refer mainly to the visionary projects of

⁴⁴³ Venizelos in Delta 2002, 170-171.

⁴⁴⁴ Venizelos in Delta 2002, 170-171.

some Greek politicians and thinkers, calling for a substantial rebuilding of the state as a Turkish-Greek empire with a perspective that can be defined as federalist. These authors seem to have been quite neglected in later literature... André Coromeles, *Réforme praticable en Turquie*, Athens, 1853; Stefanos Xenos, *Union or Dismemberment of Turkey*, London, 1876; Georgi Pitzipios, *L'Orient, les Réformes de l'Empire Byzantine*, Paris, 1858... Stefanos Xenos was a fervent Greek patriot and Georgi Pitzipios a man interested mainly in religion; anyway, both pursued a greater solution than the little peninsular Hellenic state (that included the minor part of the Greeks). One scholar (Somel 2001, 92, 111) includes in this group a far more famous personality, Rigas Velestinlis (known also in different ways, such as Rigas Feraios)⁴⁴⁵.

Professor İlber Ortaylı elaborates:

Certainly the reaction of the elite Ottoman Greeks indicates a different character. Some of the Phanariots during this era tried to impose a confederative administrative structure, for the safety of the Empire and their own community. One of them, André Coroméles proposed a Turco-Greek empire and suggested that the Sultan should have the title of "Sultan of the Turks and King of Greeks." Another, Stefanos Xenos, emphasized "the common interests of the Turks and Greeks is the Empire" during the days of the Bulgarian revolt and anti-Turkish demonstrations in London. Another, Pitzipios Bey suggested in his book, the adaptation of Byzantine institutions, equality of two regions and the coronation of Sultan Abdülmecid as Emperor of the Byzantines. The Church had to fight on the one side against the secularist tendencies of some modern Greeks, and on the other side to oppose the demands of the Bulgarian nationalists, who sought to have a national independent Bulgarian church⁴⁴⁶.

Note here that Sultan Abdülmecid's reign (1839–1861 AD) constitutes the revival of the *Yeniçeri* spirit; Sultan Abdülmecid was a member of the *Bektaşîyye*... Interestingly, as Aslan suggests, concerning the pamphlet attribute to André Coroméles: "Indeed, the work was written three years before the Reform Edict of 1856. Thus, the issues in work might be taken into consideration by European states and reflected in the Reform Edict, which makes it notable. Written in a report form, the work can be considered as the source of the items in the Reform Edict of 1856. Thus, it can be argued that the work informed the European ambassadors on this issue"⁴⁴⁷.

⁴⁴⁵ Grassi 2014, 79-80.

⁴⁴⁶ Ortaylı 2010, 41.

⁴⁴⁷ Aslan 2020, 206.

On May 6th, 1931, the Hellene MP Leon Maccas met President Atatürk in Ankara and subsequently sent a report to the Greek PM, Eleutherios Venizelos. In his memoirs of this meeting, Maccas states:

[Kemal was] *the apostle of a kind of a wide Hellenic-Turkish Empire* in the East, a dual Empire with two administrative capitals and with one spiritual capital, the Augusta city, that was successively Byzantium, Constantinople, Istanbul and that will always be the Crown City of a whole eastern world ... *I did not have in front of me Peter the Great of Russia* but, more, another Victor Hugo who sang new eastern poems, the new *Orientales*⁴⁴⁸.

Atatürk: not the Frankish destroyer of Christianity in Tsarist Russia, Peter the Great, but a Roman Modernist. Note how the Roman Hellene differentiates Atatürk from the Frankish-minded unconditional Westerniser, Peter the Great. We have already mention Dragoumis's and Souliotis-Nikolaïdis's friend, the journalist Sophia Spanoudi about Kemal being the greatest, and most sincere, Hellenophile as a historical reality.

Ecumenical Romanity has always had its 'hidden and misunderstood heroes'. In the case of the 1922 War, these were the Roman Hellene people of the Greek state who by voting the pro-*Entente* Venizelos government out of office in the elections of 1920 essentially stopped the momentum of the Asia Minor Greek campaign (an already lost cause that the Greek people felt would end in catastrophe), conscientiously or unconsciously, saving their fellow Romans, the Turkish people of Anatolia, from almost total annihilation neo-Frankish-style, as well as Romanity at large. And in this they cooperated with the *oikonomia* Will of God Who Himself created the opportunity for the elections to be held: the death of King Alexander of Greece as a result of a monkey bite in October 1920.

In a typically despicable and self-exonerating Frankish manner, the British Prime Minister, who played a pivotal role in the modern Frankish destruction of Romanity in Greece, Winston Churchill, wrote: "it is perhaps no exaggeration to remark that a quarter of a million persons died of this monkey's bite"⁴⁴⁹. Similarly, in the same mentality of filth, the English Liberal historian and propagandist, Arnold Joseph Toynbee, who had lent his services to the Political Intelligence Department of the British Foreign Office and consumed tons of ink pushing Greece into WWI and later the Asia Minor Campaign, came after 1922 to ridicule the Greeks for idiotically

⁴⁴⁸ Kitsikis 1995), 27 quoting from Maccas, Léon, "Atatürk et İnönü: à travers quelques souvenirs personnels", *Les Balkans*, vol. 10, 4th quarter, 1938, 362-363.

⁴⁴⁹ In his book, *The World Crisis Volume 5: The Aftermath (1918-1928)*. London: Butterworth, 1929, 409.

becoming the instrument of Britain and following the policies he himself had propagated to them and the British had imposed via gunboat 'diplomacy and coup d'état against the prospect of Greek neutrality in WWI – turning against their former Champion and Collaborator, Venizelos:

A game played with living pieces may be a cruel spectacle, and, half through her own fault, Greece has been the principal victim. The fault is only half hers, for at first she struggled hard not to be drawn into the rivalries between the Powers, and the struggle cost for her internal unity. But instead of common-sense and moderation prevailing, as since the armistice they have begun to prevail in the West, they were overborne by the pressure of the Entente Powers and the imperious personality of Mr. Venizelos; and Greece, more than ever divided at home, was pushed into that foreign policy of reckless aggrandisement towards which the blind herd-instinct under the surface of her politics was all the time impelling her. At last, fatally at war within herself and at the same time fatally united for war against a neighbouring nation, she was brought to a point from which she could neither reach internal or external peace, nor retreat without loss or even disaster... Neutrality, during the whole period during which we respected [LoL] the King's legitimate claim to insist upon it, was more prudent for Greece, and more dignified, than the purchase of territory by intervention; and it makes for the general betterment of international relations if small states always and everywhere keep as clear as possible of the rivalries between Great Powers. Indeed, King Constantine was not alone in his views. Possibly a majority among the politically educated people in Greece agreed with him...⁴⁵⁰.

"If only the British had said that to the Greeks in 1914, and 1915, and 1916 instead of twisting their arm and forcing them into the War. But here we suddenly get a complete verdict from the horse's mouth so to speak that the whole thing was disastrous for the Greeks and that they would have been much wiser to have supported the King [in 1915] if you like to the death - something that they nevertheless could not have done for the British basically manoeuvred them into the War. It is tragic to read that. And reading a lot of this stuff, I have a sympathy for the Greeks and what they suffer, but I still find it hard to understand why the Greeks do not write about this [British treachery]...⁴⁵¹"

In 1921, the Roman Greek people were prepared to follow the King to the death... If the Royalist Government had followed the feelings of the

⁴⁵⁰ Toynbee 1922, 63-67. As Patt Walsh says, "Toynbee was one of the men who constructed the Armenian Blue Book, the sort of Wellington House propaganda" (Walsh 2021).

⁴⁵¹ Walsh 2021.

people who had brought it to power, the 1922 Asia Minor Catastrophe would have probably been avoided. They did not... I could not help making a comparison with the 2015 situation, where, despite decades of modern Frankish indoctrination and material 'inputs', the Greek people found the strength to reject, by an overwhelming majority (63%), the referendum on whether Greece should accept the bailout conditions in the country's government-debt crisis proposed jointly by all Frankish Institutions, such as the European Commission (EC), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Central Bank (ECB) – only to be let down by their Government which had held the Referendum.

Thus came another Roman sacrifice in 1922: the uprooting of their Roman brothers, the Hellene *Mikrasiates* of Anatolia, and the Turkish peoples of Rumeli ('Balkans')⁴⁵². On the other hand, the Roman *Megali Idea*, which was left unfinished after the death of Atatürk, seems to have recognised this sacrifice. The famous patriot Roman Hellene author, Penelope Delta states:

[On November 11th, 1930] I explained to [Venizelos] what Fabricius (the Commerce Attaché of the German Embassy at Ankara) had told me, [i.e.,] that the belief that the deportation of the Hellenes from the Turkish occupied areas was a mistake grows all the more among the Turks and that they consider us Hellenes to be of the same race [with the Turks] and good citizens. Venizelos said to me: 'I am very interested in what you are saying because the source is safe, unbiased from racial preferences and is in full accord with what İsmet and the others had told to me [in Turkey]. It is true that the Turks are convinced that we are truthful [- as we really are -] and that we want to erase the past and live well together'⁴⁵³.

In his address to the Hellenic Parliament (December 12th, 1930), regarding the negotiations which had led to the signing of the three Helleno-Turkish Treaties of October 30th, 1930, Venizelos also vividly mentions the issue of the racial proximity of the two nations. We should also remember that after having the plasters, which were destructively put on the mainly Roman Christian icon mosaics of its walls since the late Ottoman Empire, were removed in 1932⁴⁵⁴, the *Şems* (Bektashi/Alevi) Mevlevi and Melami President of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk officially

⁴⁵² On the issue of the Mikrasiates, see the pioneering works of Renée Hirschon.

⁴⁵³ Delta 2002, 171-2. The source of this, essentially Roman, 'theory' seems to be the Istanbulite Roman Hellene Mr [Nikiforos] Moshopoulos (1871–1964 AD) [Kitsikis 1995, 27 quoting from Maccas, Léon, "Atatürk et İnönü: à travers quelques souvenirs personnels", *Les Balkans*, vol. 10, 4th quarter, 1938, 362-363].

⁴⁵⁴ On the issue of Atatürk and *Ayasofya*, see Kılıçkaya 2004.

'donated' *Ayasofya* as a museum to Ecumenical Humanity, Romanity on behalf of the Turkish nation, in 1935 - incurring the wrath of the Islamists (who, about ninety years later, in July 2022, took revenge against Atatürk when the Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan converted Hagia Sophia into a mosque again ('assisted' in his aims by the imprudent and destructive 'International Campaigns for turning that Museum into a 'Church' again', spearheaded by anti-Turkish pro-Frankish Orthodoxism in the West)). And here one must remember two things: that despite the efforts of the Islamists to put forward themselves as the sole modern heirs of the Ottoman Empire, as it will become clear by the end of the book, their appropriation of the Ottoman past is an adherence to a 19th-century caricature, parochial and distorted version of it; and that a heart-based esoteric prayer can be performed anywhere, even in a museum, irrespective of religion and creed. For it is most interesting to see that even during Ottoman de-Romanising, via times of Islamism and Westernism, as Benjamin Barker, who toured Thrace in 1823, two years after the Greek Revolution, states:

What greatly struck me was to see with what freedom the Christians and Jews enter the mosque at Adrianople without meeting the least opposition... you are even allowed here to go up the minarets and what is still more extraordinary, the Greeks are permitted to pray in the beautiful mosque of Sultan Selim on their Ascension Day. Tradition says that where that mosque stands there was formerly a Greek church called the Ascension Church. Mr Vasilaki tells me that it is a curious sight to see the Greeks with their small lighted candles, praying and crossing themselves on one side of the mosque and the Turks with their accustomed prostration on the other. After finishing their devotions, the Greeks fill small vials from a spring which is in the centre of the mosque, pretending that that water becomes Holy on the Day⁴⁵⁵.

Needless to say the characterisation ('pretending') relates to a an unbelieving Englishman blinded by intellect/material-based secular superstition.

Here is the greatness of atavistic, lived-out-based, Roman character of the Ottoman Empire - even if this example comes from its darkest de-Romanising hours:

The bureaucracy of the *Tanzimat* period, especially in the provinces of Rumelia, had a cultural fringe. A good number of them had a knowledge of Greek and Bulgarian. As Ahmed Mithat Efendi, a famous writer of the Hamidian era mentions in one of his books, "European children have to learn

⁴⁵⁵ Clogg 1969, 253-254.

foreign languages in school, but Ottoman children, Turks, Armenians and Greeks of Istanbul pick up their languages by playing with each other...". A so-called book "Tuhfet'ul Uşşak-A Present for Children" by Fevzî teaches Greek vocabulary in a poetic form to the Turks: Nam-i Hudadır Teos, ademe de antropos Dervişe der asketis, evliya adi ayos (The name of the *God* is *Theos*, and *man* is *anthropos* Dervish is *asketis*, and *evliya* is *agios*)⁴⁵⁶.

Here is Roman Orthodox Christianity and Roman Ottoman/Turkish *tasavvufi* Islam at a syzygy.

Although its nucleus lay around the primordial centre of Romanity, Hellas and Turkey as the main body of the Roman eagle, this movement extended beyond them. It initially concerned the immediate Roman lands, the 'Balkans'. "Encouraged by [1930s] the remarkable consolidation of Greco-Turkish relations, many prominent Greeks even envisaged the foundation of a Greco-Turkish confederation"⁴⁵⁷. As Venizelos himself stated "the Balkan Pact began with the Greek-Turkish friendship"⁴⁵⁸. Under the leadership of Turkey and Greece, and with the participation of Yugoslavia and Romania, the Balkan Pact was signed on February 2nd, 1934 in Athens. It was due to the Balkan Pact of 1935 that Turkey was honoured with a threat of war against Bulgaria and that the military was outnumbered 3:1; Greece was then able to move military units from its borders with Bulgaria to the Albanian front after the Italian Invasion of 1940. Atatürk's policies came to play a decisive role in the Epic Greek Victory against Mussolini's Italy of the Nazi Axis.

During the War of Independence, on July 20th, 1920, the official organ of the Atatürk-led nationalists, the *Hâkimiyet-i Milliye*'s front page stated:

The biggest enemy is the enemy of the enemies, not this or that nation: On the contrary, it is 'the calamity of capitalism', which is virtually in possession of the whole world, and his child, 'imperialism' ... 'Capitalism' is not just the enemy of this or that nation. On the contrary, it is the common enemy of the whole world and of all nations. It is the power which set the nations against one another; it is that which makes brothers spill the blood of one another; it is the source of intrigue; it is the instigator of the extreme poverty which is widespread in the world. In short, it is the sole tyrant which makes humanity/humanness moan. ... The battles, which this tyranny resorted to from time to time in order to be successful, did not concern only

⁴⁵⁶ In Ortaylı 2010, 44.

⁴⁵⁷ Alexandris 1983, 181 (quoting Kitsikis).

⁴⁵⁸ Kitsikis 1995, 31.

force and arms. *Its most powerful weapons are the banks and the trade unions.* It is especially with these weapons which it defeats the nations...⁴⁵⁹.

This is a key characteristic of Atatürk's modern Romanity and, indeed, of all true Romans, *national independence for all nations and peoples.*

The Greek leader who refused to surrender Greece to the Italian Fascists in 1940 at the onset of WWII, Ioannis Metaxas, once wrote:

[Frankish-type/Liberal English] Democracy is the only and true child of Capitalism. It is the means by which Capitalism maintains its rule over the popular masses. It is the means by which Capitalism manages to masquerade Its Will as the will of people. [Capitalism]... makes the reaming world their slave – yet slaves that think they are free... No matter how democratic they are, States that have a [state]-managed economy, and by this we mean those which strive for the interest of the people, are not in the interest of Capitalism. For in those states, the exploitation of the whole of the people by the representatives of Capitalism is not possible. Capitalism calls these states, *tyrannies*... and, playing with words, it calls the places that prevail, Democracies. And deceives the little people with words. It calls Its Dominion, Democracy; and the political system that is enforced, liberalism, love of freedom, and thus, Freedom.⁴⁶⁰ My God!!!; How [the West and the Russians] dispose the various peoples! Like beasts. You grab this [nation/people], so I will grab that [nation/people]. And about when this or that [nation/people] wants to live their own lives, free, and to develop by themselves? Nothing! It is what I want, *I England*, or, *I France*, or, *I Russia*, or *I Germany*, or *I Italy*⁴⁶¹.

It is here that I owe the reader a flashforward: from the Hellenophile Roman Fatih Sultan Basileus Mehmed to a friend of Ion Dragoumis and Athanasios Souliotis-Nikolaidis, the journalist Sophia Spanoudi, who stated on September 14, 1932 after her interview with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk:

Today, Kemal is the greatest *Hellenophile*. And he is a sincere *Hellenophile* without relation to any further objective aim or any political opportunism. This is the historical reality which everyone must believe without any hesitation⁴⁶².

⁴⁵⁹ Bolluk and Güran, 2006, 79-80; İlhan 2005, 29 (partially), emphasis ours.

⁴⁶⁰ Metaxas 1960, 446-447.

⁴⁶¹ Metaxas 1951, 446-447.

⁴⁶² Spanoudi 2008, 168, from Spanoudi's "How I saw Kemal" (14-9-1932), based on her interview with Atatürk. Born in Constantinople in 1878, the Roman Greek Sofia Sapanoudi moved permanently to Athens in 1922 and was sent to Istanbul in

Kitsikis writes that

The newly clothed-in-Frankish [garments] Greek statelet of 1832 wrote off the organic relation that bound together Hellenism and Romania [(Romanity)]. The tragedy of the conquered Greek soul went on [unabated] despite the cries of desperation and resistance that Pericles Giannopoulos, Ion Dragoumis and Athanasios Souliotis-Nikolaidis had put forward during the span of the 19th and 20th centuries⁴⁶³.

Even in more harsh terms – deservingly or undeservingly is for you to decide:

[Despite appearances,] the breaking-up of Hellas began in the “national rebirth” of 1821, when, by the will of the Franks, we relegated ourselves from the position of an imperial people to that of a Peloponnesian Kurdistan[, i.e., a Western puppet protectorate] and replaced the Phanariot nobility of the spirit with a governing class of newly cloth-in-Frankish pen-pushers⁴⁶⁴.

The corresponding ‘aulic’ sources of the 15th-16th centuries testifying against Fatih Sultan Basileus Mehmed as having the same character of those who ‘demonised’ Atatürk in the 20th century: they were anti-Roman *Frankophones* – at best, that is. It is important to understand that, from the Greek side, the events of 1919-1922 are historized not from the point of view of Romanity but from the point of view of what Romanides, calls, Grecque-ism, for both internal Greek factions responsible for the uprooting of the Asian Minor Romanity, i.e., the pro-King and the Venizelist were equally subservient to the Western overlord (being the Germans, and, primarily the English, then French, respectively). Only after the Western factor, or rather problem, or as Toynbee, who was otherwise heavily involved in the early 20th-century Western anti-Roman activities, calls it with the perverted audacity of the Western killer (at the same time he bore the deeply embedded, typically Western self-exoneration), *the Western Question in Greece and Turkey* was minimized between 1923-1938 would it become apparent.

1932 as a correspondent of the highly intellectual Greek newspaper *Πρωϊα* (*Proia*). Savvakis writes about her: “unknown to our contemporaries due to the peculiarity of our era, she will be looked for and her memory will be recollected in the future when the Greeks will regain their self-consciousness” (Spanoudi 2008, 17).

⁴⁶³ Kitsikis 2001, 64.

⁴⁶⁴ Kitsikis 2001, 168.

Among Atatürk's promoters and admirers, we find two key Greek political personalities, indeed Prime Ministers of Greece who occupy the two ends of the political spectrum: the formerly Anglophile Liberal Eleutherios Venizelos, and the former General Conservative, Ioannis Metaxas. Venizelos clearly came to understand his ill-conceived Asia Minor Campaign the hard way in the wake of the diminished Frankish Western influence, foremost in Greece – for as long as this salvific period for Hellenism lasted... On the contrary, Metaxas is characterised by consistency, honesty and lack of opportunism. "Metaxas' actions portray a remarkable consistency. During the electoral battle of 1920, the supporters of King Konstantine had renounced the Asia Minor Campaign as an imperialist adventure. And yet after they won the elections, they declared that they would continue the war against the Turks. Metaxas proved his consistency refusing to cooperate with the King's governments"⁴⁶⁵.

During his talks with the preeminent members of the Greek political-military leadership on April 29, 1921 (PM Dimitrios Gounaris, Nikolaos Theotokis (Minister of Military Affairs), Petros Protopapadakis (Minister of Finance), Athanasios Exadaktylos (Military)), Metaxas warned them about the cul-de-sac and the perilous consequences of the Greek policy of conquest of Asia Minor:

Do you see where your policy leads? It is a policy of conquest of a people [the Turkish people] who does not mean to be conquered, a conquest that has not been made possible, up to now, by the introduction of our civilisation, of our influences, of Hellenism, as it had been in antiquity... Gounaris replayed that this was not never our policy. Venizelos brought us there. The war fell on our hands. You could have reached a compromise [with the Turks], I replied... [Protopapadakis kept on:] So, are we to forfeit our claims on Smyrna? To leave Asia Minor? For this is the only acceptable course that the Turks will accept. [Metaxas replies:] Of course, we should quit the military occupation of Smyrna, and, of course, of our sovereignty there. Yet we should establish an autonomous regime there that will secure free development and gradually the dominance of Hellenism there. *The correct policy towards Turkey is friendly cooperation.* [Exadaktylos said:] But they massacre us there! [Metaxas replies:] They massacre us there because we made their conquest in Asia Minor our programme. They massacre us since they know that they will never gain our friendship, that nothing can ever change our enmity towards them, and thus nothing good can come to them from us. Of course, this does not justify the massacres, yet, do we not commit ourselves massacres there? "We ourselves commit massacres there" Exadaktylos said to me "Indeed, we want and must

⁴⁶⁵ Kitsikis 1974, 91.

exterminate them. The Turk does not understand otherwise". [PM Gounaris:] "We must win there; it is for this that we need you". [Metaxas replies:] "I am talking about this exactly. We cannot win there, i.e., to impose our will on Kemal, so that we safeguard what we have taken. For if we are going to lose what we have taken in a short while and indeed together with a bigger catastrophe, this cannot be called victory⁴⁶⁶.

When during the conversation, Metaxas was refusing to assume the leadership of the Greek Army in the Asia Minor Campaign, his interlocutors told him,

...the Greek people fear that we will lose the campaign, that we cannot win militarily. If you take over the Command, they will regain faith in victory. [Metaxas:] So if I assume the Command, it will be as if I say to the Greeks: keep calm, now that I am here we will win now, you too can be certain. [Everybody said:] Of course. [Metaxas:] But then it is as if you asked me to deceive the people for I know that we cannot achieve our aim militarily. [Protopapadakis:] Indeed, let it be so that we deceive the people, if need arises let it be so.... [Theotokis:] Why do you think that we cannot succeed into realising our policy in Asia Minor by means of war? [Metaxas:] Because you strive for the conquest of Asia Minor without preparing it through the Hellenisation of the country. Only in appearances all this is about the Treaty of Sevres. In reality, it is about the dissolving of Turkey and establishing our state on her lands. But even if it had been only about the Treaty of Sevres, yet even in the area around Smyrna we are ethnologically a minority. As for the inner Asia Minor, the numbers of our population there are very small. In addition, the Turks sense what we are after. If they had lacked national feeling maybe this policy would have been possible. But they proved that they possess not religious but national feeling. And they mean to fight for their freedom and independence, i.e., exactly for the things that we ourselves had fought for against them [in 1821]⁴⁶⁷.

Above all, Metaxas understood that Greece had become a cat's-paw of Imperialist Liberal England and, most importantly, that the Frankish character of the Greek Asia Minor Campaign was largely an extension of the Venizelist Dictatorship of 1916, as the compulsory participation of Greece in World War I was violently forced upon her at naval gunpoint and coup d'état by Great Britain.

I have lived through a lot, I have understood even more, I have stopped offering myself as a dedicated man⁴⁶⁸.

⁴⁶⁶ Metaxas 1964, 85-87.

⁴⁶⁷ Metaxas 1964, 82-83.

⁴⁶⁸ Metaxas 1964, 92.

On May 16th/29th, 1921 at Neon Faliron, Metaxas wrote in his "Notebook of Thoughts":

Today's Greeks... are bent towards a quick and effortless exploitation of things[/circumstance], and not towards an active and persevering cultivation of them. It is for this that our national action has taken the form of conquest and not of generating civilization. Our dreams follow instead of being in the lead⁴⁶⁹.

"Metaxas' foreign policy was based more on neutrality and far less on neutralism. Nevertheless, even within the very narrow framework of the royal dictatorship of [King] George II, Metaxas tried with various manoeuvrings to establish a rudimentary policy based on neutralism – inspired by the relevant Venizelist attempt of the 1928-1932 period (that had nonetheless failed) and even more from the relevant effort by Atatürk"⁴⁷⁰ – which, as we will see, had been utterly successful.

[From his youth in Salonica] until the end [of his life] Kemal had an eye for beautiful young artists; among his 'conquest' was [the Greek diva,]Zozo Ntalmas [(1905 (Constantinople) – 1988 (Athens) who he courted around 1925 when she was on a trip to Istanbul)]. Like all his girlfriends, Zozo Dalmas was very 'hold back' in her confessions about Kemal. She spent her last years in a nursing home... in Athens; she used to say that their conversations with Kemal were in Greek, and that when she particularly sang the song, *Pasha*, he used to sing along in Greek. He kept a constant interest for his birthplace, Salonica... [Dalmas narrates:] "He wanted Turkey to have good relations with Greece. At that time, all the Greek and Turkish Prime Ministers were trafficking back and forth between Athens, Ankara and Istanbul. All Venizelos, Tsaldaris, Inonu, Metaxas... Yet things went astray for he died, and Venizelos died too... Kemal's death was a heavy blow to me. At that time, I came to learn from [the head of Metaxas' Greek Internal Security Services,] Maniadakis that *Metaxas was very saddened by Kemal's death*. [Metaxas said:] "How are we now able to find an accord with the new ones [(Inonu)]? They are dwarfs, *Kemal was a Colossus*". He was right"⁴⁷¹.

From the daily *Ελεύθερον Βήμα* (Free Pontium), the telegram of condolences from the Greek PM, Ioannis Metaxas to the Turkish President, Celal Bayar, under the title, *Τό Ἑλληνικόν Πένθος* [The Greek Moaning] on November 12, 1938 (the day after Atatürk's death):

⁴⁶⁹ Metaxas 1964, 108.

⁴⁷⁰ Kitsikis 1974, 92.

⁴⁷¹ Christodoulou 2020, 119-121, emphasis ours.

With utterly painful feelings, the Royal Government, the Greek people and I, we partake in the national mourning that grieves the friend and an ally country of Turkey so heavily. In this hard test, the thoughts of the whole Greece turn towards the noble friendly nation for expressing its deepest sympathy. Paying its honourable respect to the memory of the renowned leader, the brave military man and the enlightened reformer of Turkey, Hellas will never forget that President Kemal Atatürk, who was the main founder of the Greek-Turkish Rapprochement and who forged the unsolvable bonds of friendship that bind together the two countries in the common ideal of peaceful cooperation. Hellas will faithfully safeguard the emotional memory of the deceased whose powerful deeds will direct the fortunes of the noble Turkish nation forever. Metaxas.

On his part, the greatness of the formerly unconditional Anglophile Venizelos lies in the fact that, by essentially recognising the anti-Roman, neo-Frankish, ideological-political character of Western-inspired Kolettis' *Megali Idea* which he himself had adhered to and promoted with devastating results for the Asia Minor Roman Greeks, as well the Roman Turkish people, approached his former 'enemy' with true sincerity that was fully reciprocated. Yet, in order to achieve this, the plan had to follow Atatürk's Roman anti-Imperialist principle of true 'national independence' and 'moral equality of all nations within humanity': "In order to be able to approach [Atatürk], Venizelos also distanced himself from the [unconditional] Westernophiles"⁴⁷². Indeed, such was the sincerity of both leaders going beyond mere political expediency and strategic considerations that on January 12th, 1934, Venizelos nominated Atatürk for the Nobel Peace Prize. In his letter to the Nobel committee, he stated – among other things:

Indeed, Turkey did not hesitate to accept legally the loss of provinces inhabited by other nationalities and, satisfied with the ethnic and political borders defined by the treaties, she became a true pillar for peace in the Near East. We, the Greeks, who had been driven for centuries (of bloody battles) into continuous confrontation with Turkey, were the first to feel the effects of the deep change which occurred in that country, the successor of the old Ottoman Empire. Having discerned, very soon after the catastrophe in Asia Minor, the opportunity of an understanding with reborn Turkey - which came out of the war as a national state - we offered her our hand which she took with sincerity⁴⁷³.

⁴⁷² Kitsikis 1995, 23.

⁴⁷³ The unearthing of this generally ignored document relates to the relevant efforts of the late Dr. Christos D. Katsetos of Drexel University (College of Medicine)

Remember the hideous treatment of Fatih Sultan Basileus Mehmed by the pro-Frankish anti-Christian Palaiologan *aulic* sources. In their treatment of Atatürk, today's *aulic* sources of the Western overlords went from being next to nothing to being mere imitators.

Now staying within Romanity, take the other end of the political spectrum of that of Metaxas: the head of the 'Greek People's Liberation Army' (ELAS), Athanasios Klaras alias Aris Velouchiotis (1905-1945 AD). Literally creating a guerrilla army of almost 50.000 fighting men-women (with another 100.000 in reserve) from scratch, initially in the Greek Rumeli, Velouchiotis succeeded in liberating most of Nazi-occupied rural Greece. While a member of the Greek Communist Party, Aris represented a kind of peculiar, Greek national-left-type of agrarian non-essentialist communitarianism (of course, with modern Communist references-parlance), which was more akin to a modern secularised form of the 15th-century rebellion of the Roman Turco-Hellene Şeyh Bedreddin Simaveni than to the late 18th-century Rigas' vision (albeit in a more national framework), and to Atatürk's Kemalism (albeit with more class struggle elements) instead of by-the-book atheist Marxist-Leninism.

Velouchiotis' views on religion in a predominately Orthodox Greece match more those of a Roman Orthodox Christian rather than an 'orthodox' member of a Communist Party. It seems that, for him, religion is almost as an objective reality as is 'clash struggle' for a Communist believer. In a speech delivered on October 23, 1944, that made the leadership of the Greek Communist Party and their masters in Moscow especially uneasy, Aris addressed the people of the newly liberated town of Lamia from a balcony full of enormous Greek, as well as Allied flags, with the following words:

They say that Communism destroys churches and skin-offs priests. Do you think that the [Greek] Communists are so stupid as to destroy the churches which present no obstacle to what they want to accomplish? Is the [real] problem the churches, or the fleets of [the shipowners]...? Why therefore should we burn down the churches? Who acts against religion? Will we skin-off priests? But why? We see that thousands of priests are in the forefront of our movement and that the contribution of the clergy, which has been by our side, is invaluable. Why is it then that they [i.e. the pro-Western (English) pro-Monarchical right/ultra-right wing opposition] are present themselves as the protectors of the Church while they demolished them in collaboration

(Translation from French into English by Stella Colston). The initially Hellenic initiative most probably began on August 6th, 1925, when "upon presenting his credentials, the Hellene Ambassador made known that he will work for the strengthening of the good relations between Hellas and Turkey" (Goloğlu 1972, 135).

with the Germans and indeed skin-off priests? Communism, they say, will abolish religion. But *religion is a matter of conscience*. How is it possible to be abolished [by a law decree]? *Abolishing religion is an impossible thing*, even if the communists would like to abolish it. *Religious conscience cannot be abolished by a simple order*. ... If we indeed examine this matter deeply, we will see that it is *they* [, i.e., *the pro-Western pro-Monarchical right-wing opposition*] *who are irreligious because there is not a trace of religious conscience in them, and the only god that they worship is god-Mammon, the god of money...*⁴⁷⁴.

Later we will see how the faculty of conscience/consciousness in Roman Christianity and Islam is largely identified with the organ pertaining to the Divine-human union (spiritual heart/*nous/kalp/gönül*), occupying a central position in Roman Christian and Islamic religiosities. It is amazing how the unsuspecting words of Aris' brother, Charalampos, written almost 30 years after his death seem to carry the scent of the Roman Silence that Rumi's 13th-century poetry was depicting above in the inter-encapsulating faces/persons of Humanity:

Forgive me, my Brother Aris! I am speaking to you yet I think that I speak to all of your brothers, the human beings. And together with me, I think they speak to you too. *Your face and their faces*⁴⁷⁵. *Their faces and your face*. How much you identified, my Brother, the one and the many forms into the one and only, the Face of the Human Being! Forgive me, it is as I am taken in by my emotion, so I do not know what I am saying! Am I not right though? For what else can You be but the integral form of the Human Being?⁴⁷⁶

6th-century AD Saint Barsanouphious the Great:

Emmanuel means, *With us is God...* If we see all people as the one and the same human being, and we see all the days of the year as equal and the same, then God is with us truly. If we love all those who hate us, reproach us, swear at us, despise us, treat us unjustly and bring us sorrow in the same way as those who love us, praise us, succour us, and comfort us, then God is with us truly.⁴⁷⁷

13th-century AD Rumi:

Gaze into what is not ashamed or afraid of any truth.

⁴⁷⁴ Karagiorgos 2010, 95, emphasis ours.

⁴⁷⁵ In Greek, the word, *πρόσωπον*, means both face and person.

⁴⁷⁶ Klaras 1997, 12, emphasis ours.

⁴⁷⁷ Saint Barsanouphious the Great 1997, 493-495.

Contain all human faces in your own without any judgements of them.
Be pure emptiness.
What is inside that? You ask.
Silence is all I can say⁴⁷⁸.

Here we should remind our readers that Aris was a military-political leader living and acting in a Frankish Nazi-occupied country, not a theologian in a monastery or an academic font of and/or in front of a desk...

A key common Roman characteristic between Atatürk, Metaxas, and Aris – note that the Metaxas' regime had Aris imprisoned and exiled - is their utter devotion to the idea of *National Independence*. "ELAS was the only [military organisation] that was not dependent on Allied assistance and the [organisation] which had the highest number of attacks against the Wehrmacht"⁴⁷⁹. As far as the former is concerned, "in the summer of 1943 'only a small part [of Greece]' [was] in the hands of the [German] conquerors. In the liberated areas [by ELAS] neither the German- slave-like Government of Athens nor the English-slave-like Government[-in-Exile] in Cairo h[ad] any saying whatsoever"⁴⁸⁰. Politically, those liberated areas were governed by the "National Liberation Front" (EAM), a primarily left-oriented organisation yet also including various right-wing and centre-oriented entities and members. Even the German Military Governor of Greece, B. Spaniel stated in his report of 5-10-1943: "The Free [part of] Greece not only is not governed by foreign [forces] but lives under the most democratic institutions that the Greek people have known to date. This free part [the country] lives in the best conditions vis-à-vis the rule of law since the creation of the Greek state" (quoted in Charitopoulos 2009, 330). The second-in-command of the British-supported usually anti-ELAS right-wing guerrilla group, the 'National Republican Greek League' (EDES), Komninos Pyromaglou (1988) wrote: "Anyone, Greek or foreigner, who will put into question the national action of EAM- ELAS in reality ushers in an accusation against the whole of the Greek people smearing their patriotism and their sacrifices"⁴⁸¹.

Although Atatürk managed to materialise his revolution within its *telos*, Aris did not. Yet in his death lies again the secret of his Romanity in an unexpected way. Having been denounced as a 'traitor of Communism' by the Soviet Union-controlled Greek Communist Party and being the number one public enemy for the British-led Greek Government, Aris was hunted

⁴⁷⁸ Barks 2007, 9.

⁴⁷⁹ Mazower quoted in Charitopoulos 2009, 350.

⁴⁸⁰ Charitopoulos 2009, 330.

⁴⁸¹ In Charitopoulos 2009, 345

down by a Greek Army detachment (made up of right-wing pro-Royalists and left-wing-Communist members) to his death – yet without ever being captured alive⁴⁸². Which is very much revealing for the ideological make-up of the apparently antithetical trends of the revolutions of Liberal Capitalism and Socialist Communism, since, as we will further see, “in their apparent antithesis lies veiled a fundamental unity because the presence and identification of this antithesis presupposes the acceptance of the key precepts of the Enlightenment framework”⁴⁸³. Or, as Carroll states, “in term of first principles,” socialism and Marxism were “to prove no more than a subspecies of liberalism”⁴⁸⁴. That is why even though he preceded Guevara (1928-1967 AD) almost by twenty years, Velouchiotis’ revolutionism remains largely unknown internationally – while domestically it is ‘officially’ systematically defamed. Had he somehow fitted the Frankish worldview instead of the Roman one, Hollywood movies and t-shirts would have carried the name *Aris* more than that of Che.

This Enlightenment-derived antithetical synergy between Capitalism and Socialism/Communism can be embodiedly witnessed in the treatment of their representatives offered to Roman Hellenic ex-ELAS members in the aftermath of the disarming of the ELAS in 1945. As a last act of desperation after having wilfully signed the agreement that dismantled ELAS with the London-controlled pro-Royalist Government, seeing that the latter had not even the intention of honouring its clause referring to the punishment of those Greeks that collaborated with the Germans during the war, the leadership of the Moscow-led, Greek Communist Party created a guerrilla army, the ‘Democratic Army of Greece’ (DSE). Yet, its difference with ELAS was fundamental, essentially fitting into the Frankish ‘Capitalism vs. Communism’ paradigm:

DSE was an army immersed in the spirit of [Communist] Party orthodoxy; it had a totally different [ideological-political] content than that of the liberation-oriented ELAS. ... Nobody [(i.e. neither DSE nor the Government)] wanted the former ELAS members. [Not only DSE but] also the [pro-Royalist] state authorities had a special treatment in store for them. When DSE fighters were arrested [by the government forces], it was not possible to execute all of them. They were usually court-marshalled ending up receiving multiple-years prison sentences or the death penalty, yet without the later ever being actualised. With one exemption though: that is, if they had been former ELAS guerrillas, in which case, they received the death penalty and were executed immediately. 90% of all those executed in

⁴⁸² Karagiorgos 2010, 299-352.

⁴⁸³ Retoulas 2012, 212.

⁴⁸⁴ Carroll 2004, 143.

the period between 1945 and 1950 carried the stigma of having been an ELAS fighter⁴⁸⁵.

It seems that irrespective of the historical stage or its religio-ideological composition (Catholicism, Reformation, Enlightenment, Nietzschean Genealogy), Frankism exhibits some form of atavistic anti-Roman genocidal impulse at best and, at worst, can be accused of systematically exterminating the Roman ethos. For, even in modernity, exactly as it was effected in relation to the initially Roman Hellenic Revolution of 1821 after 1830 by the pro-Frankish Greek elite, 20th-century Hellenic reality had to conform to the Procrustean bed of a Frankish-controlled dualistic Manichaean-like schema in which everything that could bow down to it was severed (either by being marginalised or physically annihilated).

But before the true Roman TurcoHellenic *Megali Idea* was to be put in action, the establishment of the *laik* national Republic of Turkey had to take place.

Theoria, Exegesis, Data: Epistemological Methodological Concerns

As Father John Romanides states in the *Eisagoge* of his seminal book, *Ρωμανοσύνη (Romanity)*:

...in essence, this work is a call to the Roman men and women [of West and East] to take in their hands the scientific struggle for resurrecting Romanity from its scientific death which was prepared by: 1) the Franks from the 9th century onwards, 2) the Russians after the [Ottoman] conquest of Constantinople, 3) the Greeks [i.e. former Romans with a pro-Frankish consciousness] before that conquest, ... 4) the neo-Greeks [of the Frankish derived-nationalism] of the enslaved to the Europeans and Russians insignificant Greece (*Elladitsa*), who turned the Roman [Hellenic] Revolution of 1821 into a defeat for Romanity [and Hellenity] and into a triumph for the Greekness[/Grequism] of Charlemagne and the neo-Greekness of the 'philhellenes' of the Great Powers"⁴⁸⁶

- and, in our view, 5) the Ottoman Islamists after the mid-18th and the Ottoman unconditional Westernists after 1850, and 6) the Turks after the death of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1938.

⁴⁸⁵ Charitopoulos 2009, 767-768.

⁴⁸⁶ Father John Romanides 20002, 15.

By Greekness and neo-Greekness, we mean not neo-Hellenism as such but only its non-Roman part ... The neo-Greek is a continuator of the tradition of the Greeks before the Capture [of Constantinople], who heralded to us the need of the Frankishisation of the spirit, in order for us to be saved from the slavery of the body⁴⁸⁷.

As we have said above, in its fuller understanding, ultimately all history is a history of mentalities and actions in inter-encapsulation. In its fullest understanding, ultimately, true history is the history of the presence of God in a history of mentalities and actions in inter-encapsulation; the history that see, points and guides *Supra*: the inter-encapsulation of the Spiritual Heart (Nous)/Theoria – Intellect/Exegesis/Interpretation – Body/Actions/Data.

Within that framework, what we will follow is the history of Romanity, particularly its Ottoman and Turkish part, focusing on the phenomenon of secularisation. Our approach contrasts by incorporation with all modes of Western Frankish modes of enquiry in that it considers the differentiated unity of ‘intellect/soul’ and ‘body’ as the inescapable condition for the attainment of understanding. And since understanding precedes explanation, this unity also becomes a prerequisite for the latter. Interestingly, this inescapable unity of intellect and body is a core part of the ‘thought system’ of ancient Greece (especially Aristotle)⁴⁸⁸, and, above all, Orthodox Christianity⁴⁸⁹ and the predominant Balkan-Anatolian Islamic ‘Sufism’, *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* (‘the unity of being’). In this later framework, the intelligible and the bodily constantly inter-encapsulate and inter-transmigrate into each other, i.e., the bodyfication of the intellect and the spiritualisation of the body. That is why, in Orthodox Christianity, “morality and sociality are dimensions of life as a whole”⁴⁹⁰. A modern version of it is present in Rousseau, when he argues that “society has to be studied in the individual, the individual in society; those who wish to separate politics from morals will never understand either”⁴⁹¹. The most recent manifestation of this mode of enquiry, which is usually referred to as hermeneutics⁴⁹², is represented in the works of Hans-Georg Gadamer and Alasdair MacIntyre – two of the few modern Aristotelians in the West. While in introductory hermeneutics the intellect/soul-body unity has a latent form, in MacIntyre’s

⁴⁸⁷ Father John Romanides 2002, 10

⁴⁸⁸ Loudovikos 2006, 195.

⁴⁸⁹ Loudovikos 2006, 195.

⁴⁹⁰ Thunberg 1985, 93.

⁴⁹¹ Rousseau in MacIntyre 2000, 187.

⁴⁹² For an introductory summary of ‘hermeneutics’ see Davison 1998.

philosophy it becomes totally apparent yet within the confines of his largely Thomist Aristotelianism.

As far as secularisation is concerned, there is no attempt to date to intelligibly and anatomically as a differentiated whole to account for and explain the specificity of the global secularisation problematic. This concerns both Western secularism in general as well as Turkish secularism (*laiklik*). Concerning *laiklik*, the only type of 'explanation' – and indeed a very inadequate one – offered in a Bernard-Lewis-type approach is that *laiklik* was an almost total rupture with the past, leaving us wondering about the fact that *laiklik* has been widely accepted and supported by Turkish society – the more so since in some studies it is equated with irreligion or an anti-religious attitude. As there is no work to date that examines Ottoman Islam throughout the span of the life of the Ottoman Empire, there is also no academic or non-academic work that provides an *explanation* of the particular form taken by *laiklik* – at the same time effecting a separation between the worldly and the religious, and yet creating a public religious space.

As expected, Roman Turkish *laiklik* challenges mainstream Western modernisation and the 'secularisation thesis', which cannot account for the presence of a public religion in conditions of secular modernity while at the same time effecting separation of the worldly and the religious sphere – except maybe with only a purely power-centric environment. It also redraws the borders of the normative claims and purported universal applicability of the Western-centric approach to secularism within the religio-ideological-geographical space of the global human *Ecumene*.

Despite its excessive wording, in truth, this work is but a path of an embodied dialogue with and within stillness, silence and ever-moving rest, a voyage into and out of *hesychia*, from within and without Romanity. Born downwardly yet also prophetically in the bodiliness of Hebraity,

Gracious is the LORD, and just; and our GOD is merciful. The LORD preserves the simple: I was brought low, and He saved me. Return to thy rest [(*menuchah*)], O my soul; for the LORD has dealt bountifully with thee⁴⁹³.

Moving upwardly in the intellectuality of Hellenity,

... *sōphron*, *dikaïos* [(just)], and *sophos* [(wise)]. 'Sōphosunē' ... [as]the name of an aristocratic virtue[, i.e. a virtue of excellence and perfection], it had been used to characterize a man who could have aggrandized himself beyond due limit but preferred deliberately to curb himself, so that he might

⁴⁹³ Tehillim/Psalms 116: 5-8.

enjoy hēsuchia[/hesychia], that peacefulness of spirit in which the victor deservedly rests after the agōn [(struggle)]⁴⁹⁴

...concluding in their most perfected stage and yet being none of and unbounded by them, Roman Christianity as *ἡ τῶν πάντων ἐνότης* (*the unity of all being/existents*)⁴⁹⁵; and on the way down, on the condition of ‘for the sake-of’ Roman Christianity. Despite its excessive wording, in truth, this work is but Roman Islam as *vahdet-i vücut* (the unity of being) with its *Loving Muhammadan Reality* (*Hakikat Muhammadiyya*), this *hesychia* pertains to humanness itself and the *Ecumene* as a whole, and above all, it is not bound to any dubious modern conception of religion as such. All it takes to follow this path is the presence of a heart and a mind, the newly uncreated love-broadened ‘reason’:

Now let silence speak.
As that begins we will start out...⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹⁴ MacIntyre 1988, 48.

⁴⁹⁵ See Christodoulos (Archimadrite) *et al.* 1997.

⁴⁹⁶ Rumi (in Barks 2007, 8).

CHAPTER 1

A HARMONIOUS PATH: ROMAN VAHDET-I VÜCUD ISLAM AND SECULARISATION

Be you therefore perfect as your heavenly Father is Perfect.
—The Lord Jesus Christ¹

Don't say 'I 've read, I 've learned', Don't say 'I 've worshipped a lot'. If
you do not accept the Perfect Human Being, all other works are futile.
—Yunus Emre/İmre (c. 1240 – 1329)²

Our Master, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said:
He who knows himself knows His Lord.
He did not say: He who eliminates himself knows his Lord!
—Ibn Arabi³

The Western Secularisation Problematic

Definitions conceal as much as they reveal. More often than not, the outward clarity and completeness of definitions of social concepts is deceptive. While a definition may be justified by the milieu in which the concept is socially actualised, no definition that claims to represent the human condition in a global perspective can be valid as long as it overlooks the inherent diversity among societies and cultures. The core reality to understand here is a non-hierarchical hierarchy of Being which safeguards each constitutive element both towards unification as well as particularisation within all elements of love-intellect-power.

No concept is lacking in this manner more than the type of secularism developed in modern Western societies, which has been taken as the Lydian

¹ Matthew 5:48.

² Yunus Emre 1989, 51.

³ Ibn Arabi 1997a., 236.

stone in assessing societies and nations on the scales of modernity. Secularism is normatively entrenched in modernisation theory, which prescribes its presence in contemporary societies that seem to have reached a sufficient level of ‘civilisational’ development.

Two interrelated definitions of secularism stem from the Western Christian experience. One of them stipulates the separation of Church and State. This definition is both revealing and concealing. On the one hand, it highlights some of the lines along which the ‘battle’ between the Middle Ages and modernity has been fought in Western milieus, i.e., *the inherent conflict between the religious and the worldly*. It does this by presenting the outcome of a very prolonged and complicated process, without reference to the ideas, actors and social factors involved. This separation-based definition, as Kuçuradi argues, “is nevertheless a ‘negative’ [one], in the technical sense of the term, a definition which states nothing about the *specificity* of the ideas and principles on which secularisation or ‘modernisation’ was based and which at present causes many difficulties in understanding the importance of secularisation”⁴. Indeed, from this definition we learn nothing about the specificity and restricted relevance of the Western secularisation problematic as a historical trajectory of moral change in a particular type of society. While claiming universality, such an approach totally disregards the relevant experience of other socio-political milieus in which the religious precepts, processes, actors and institutional arrangements were different. In our view, the inclusion of this very different experience, more than being simply a challenge, is also an opportunity for ‘unity in difference, difference in unity’ when it comes to understanding religiosity, secularisation and secularism in a universal setting. The other constitutive definition of secularism, which here operates concurrently with the first, is that it amounts to the *privatisation, or else the de-publicisation, of religion* as a condition of modernity. As Fitzgerald states for the Western case: “Whereas the singularity and universality of Christianity encompassed the church-state and authorized its own science and its own ‘political’ practices, today to be Christian is to practice a personal and essentially private right licensed by the non-religious nation state”⁵.

Both definitions are constitutive elements of what is called ‘the secularisation thesis’. This thesis creates a unified paradigm-theory that provides a valid conceptualisation of the multiplicity and specificity of the various models of secularism present in different Western societies. As its main proponents, Bruce and Wallis, describe it: “Stated briefly the

⁴ Kuçuradi 1994, 172-3.

⁵ Fitzgerald 2008.

secularisation thesis asserts that modernisation (itself not a simple concept) brings in its wake (and may itself be accelerated by) ‘the diminution of the social significance of religion’⁶. According to them, modernisation involves three distinctive dimension-processes: social differentiation, societalisation and rationalisation. “Social differentiation is the process by which specialized roles and institutions are developed or arise to handle specific features or functions previously embodied in, or carried out by, one role or institution”⁷. The assertion is that by professionalisation and its resulting secular institutions the lay specialist will, to a different extent depending on the nature of the society and the religious institutions, displace the cleric as professional. Essentially embodied within this process of social differentiation is a fragmentation by which “the plausibility of a single moral universe in which all manner and conditions of persons have a place in some grand design is subverted”⁸. Societalisation describes a process in which a kind of anonymous society, the ‘nation state’, is developed. The locality, or community, withers away, only to be replaced by “a societal system [which] relies less on the utilisation of a shared moral order and more on the utilisation of efficient technical means of eliciting and monitoring appropriate behaviour”⁹. Therefore, “the consequence of differentiation and societalization is that the plausibility of any single overarching moral and religious system declines, to be displaced by competing conceptions which have less connection to role performance in an anonymous and impersonal public domain and more to privatised, individual experience. Religion may retain its subjective plausibility, but it does so at the price of its objective taken-for-grantedness. Religion becomes privatised and it is pushed to the margins and interstices of the social order. Where it survives as a widespread practice it will tend to do so on the basis of an attenuation of what is specifically religious about it; that is, at the expense of supernaturalism. Otherwise, it will survive and be transmitted best in the private subjectivity of individuals and families or in tight-knit sectarian groups which can cut themselves off from the world to varying degrees”¹⁰. The overall modernisation process is sealed by rationalisation, which can be defined as “the pursuit of efficient technical means of securing this-worldly ends”¹¹. Note here how the *Supraness* of Romanity falls outside the view of the Western Frankish periscope as ‘religion’ is related to the supernatural, i.e.,

⁶ Wallis and Bruce 1992, 11.

⁷ Wallis and Bruce 1992, 12.

⁸ Wallis and Bruce 1992, 12.

⁹ Wallis and Bruce 1992, 13.

¹⁰ Wallis and Bruce 1992, 13.

¹¹ Wallis and Bruce 1992, 13

within a being based merely on the physical and the metaphysical, and not to the transcending of both into the *Supra*-metaphysical-physical.

At first glance, it seems that the explanation provided by the secularisation thesis probes sufficiently into the Western secularisation problematic. However, a closer look reveals that the secularisation thesis fails to identify a deeper philosophical substratum upon which the three dimensions of the secularisation thesis rest and from which those dimensions emanate. This generates an inescapable parochialism since it implies that the mere presence of the three secularisation dimensions logically results in a Western-type of secularism. As it is argued here, the three dimensions of secularisation detailed above relate to two critical fields on the philosophical canvas of First Principles. The first field addresses the philosophical concepts of the Singular and the Universal¹². The singular refers to the notions of individuality, differentiation and the individual good. The universal refers to the notions of unity, unification and the societal (religious) good. The second field centres on the issue and typology of reason and the relation between the intellect and the religious. All the three secularisation dimensions envisaged by Wallis and Bruce stem from some combination of the tripartite whole: universal – reason – singular. Indeed, the Western Road to modernity centres precisely upon the problem of the ontological and epistemological nature of, and relation between, the singular and the universal, and the associated problem of reason and its typology. Social differentiation is the result of the marriage between instrumental reason and the modern emancipated singular. Societalisation signifies the subordination of the pre-modern religious universal to the secular singular-based social. Rationalisation denotes the modern instrumentalisation of reason. The identification of these theophilosophical fields is crucial, for if they are employed correctly, they constitute pivotal tools by which the outcome of secularisation in different religious milieus can be conceptually examined and analysed.

A closer look at the rationale behind the secularisation thesis reveals that it can be deemed to be analytically sufficient only from within the perspective of Enlightenment-based modes of enquiry, in which social science - especially politics - is envisaged as being totally divorced from social morals, or rather, anchored in a new type of social morals based on individualism and instrumental reason. The three dimensions that the

¹² For a philosophical-historical discussion of the general issue of the Singular and Universal in Western medieval religio-philosophy (and consequently its relevance to the formation of Western modernity), see Klima 2002 and 2004. For a general Frankish overview of essence and being, see Gilson, Étienne 1948, *L'être et l'essence*, Vrin, Paris [consulted in the Greek version (2009)].

secularisation thesis puts forward are conceptualised a-socially and a-historically as if they represented some sort of Platonising ideal. By depicting these dimensions as generic, the secularisation thesis idealises and provides a normative character to a highly specific form of relations between the religious and the worldly, i.e., Western secularism is presented as a modern, undifferentiated and homogenising universal, which civilised societies possess and civilising ones should conform to. Yet not only secularisation has not been a globally homogeneous phenomenon but it also has its origins in a specific type of society – Western society – with a specific type of pre-existing religiosity and a specific theological and moral history. This particular trajectory gave rise to the generic form of Western secularism, with its ‘domestic’ actualisations in various Western milieus, essentially sharing ‘separation’ and ‘disestablishment’ as their common essence.

Despite its scholarly elaboration and its apparent competence vis-à-vis the general form of secularism in Western societies, the secularisation thesis remains descriptive but does not provide a sufficient analytical explanation. I argue here that this is because it does not examine the reasons, in terms of First Principles, that connect the three dimensions/processes to the particular form of secularism they are said to have caused. In other words, it does not account for the formative qualities assigned to these dimensions/processes vis-à-vis the creation of secularism in the West.

In my view, accounting for the form of secularism in a particular society involves observing the interplay between, on the one hand, the two key secularisation fields, i.e., *the singular-universal relations and the issue of reason*, and, on the other hand, *the doctrinal precepts behind the pre-existing religiosity*. It is *the juxtaposition of the two key secularisation fields with the pre-existing religiosity that can conceptually account for the transforming effects of secularisation on religiosity itself as well as on the type of ‘religion-worldly’ relations*.

As we have already said regarding Roman Christianity (its genocidal extermination in Western Europe from the Franks of Charlemagne onwards and its survival in the East):

The schism between Eastern and Western Christianity was not between East and West Romans. In actuality, it was a split between East Romans and the conquerors of the West Romans. The Roman Empire was conquered in three stages: 1st by Germanic tribes who became known as Latin Christianity, 2nd by Muslim Arabs, and finally, by Muslim Turks. In contrast to this, the ecclesiastical administration of the Roman Empire disappeared in stages from West European Romania (the Western part of the Roman nation), but has survived up to modern times in the Roman Orthodox Patriarchates of

Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. The reason for this is that the conquerors of the West Romans used the Church to suppress the Roman nation, whereas under Islam the Roman nation survived by means of the Church. In each instance of conquest, the bishops became the ethnarchs of the conquered Romans and administered Roman law on behalf of the emperor in Constantinople.¹³

In the Great Fathers of Western Christianity, such as “Saint John Cassian ... Ambrose, Jerome, Rufinus, Leo the Great, and Gregory the Great, we have an identity in doctrine, theology, and spirituality between the Eastern and Western Roman Christians”¹⁴. Yet there was one most notable exception: Augustine of Hippo (354 – 430): “the national theologian of the Franks”¹⁵. As historical events developed, “the differences between the theologies of, on the one hand, the African Augustine, and on the other hand, the Latin-speaking and Greek-speaking Romans, became the basic differences between the Franks and the Romans”³³.

Western Secular Modernity: A Brief Anatomical Encounter

In our work, *Towards Incommensurable Secularisms: The Anatomy of Western Secularisation Theory and its Relation to non-Western Christiano-Islamic Milieus*³⁴, we have shown in detail that the sources of the conflictual Western understanding of religion and secularism lie in the essentialist-dualistic doctrinal precepts of a philosophically de-Hellenised and religiously de-Romanised Frankish Augustinianism (Catholicism, Protestantism). These consist of:

- (i) an essentially intellect-centred understanding of the essentialist Divine Universal (versus the multiplicity-based and sin-ridden Bodily),
- (ii) an understanding of the nature of reason as conflictually divided between upper religious contemplative and lower human instrumental,
- (iii) an understanding of the notion of will as the key determinant of individuality/singularity divided between upper (religion/sainthood-related¹⁶) and lower (worldly/survival fall-related¹⁷), and an understanding

¹³ Father John Romanides 1981a.

¹⁴ Father John Romanides 1975.

¹⁵ Father John Romanides 2002, 89.

¹⁶ Duns Scotus’ *affectio iustitiae* of the will (Williams 2003, 345-346).

¹⁷ Duns Scotus’ *affectio commodi* of the will (Williams 2003, 345-346).

of the relations between the religious and the human as the pre-eminent religious Universal versus the subordinated human Singular.

Within the Frankish Augustinian schema, the inter-relations of these particular binary pairs contribute to an overall dualism which represents two conflicting 'moral orders': (the religious universal, contemplative upper reason, sainthood-related upper will) versus (the worldly human singular, instrumental lower reason, survival-related lower will). That is why, when the underlying Augustinian beliefs are juxtaposed with the historical interplay between the two secularisation fields (the emancipation of the human singular, representing the lower will, and the instrumentalisation of reason, representing the emancipated human singular and the lower reason) bring about a modern secular order in which, in the West, the purely 'other-worldly'/'metaphysical' religious is sidelined and subordinated to the 'purely worldly-secular – of course, purely is a rather technical academic term to highlight the schema and, of course, not an absolute division in everyday life. In other words, the previously religious order is overcome by the 'will' of the modern secular one. Yet one should not be misled by the apparent antithetical nature of these two orders since the antithesis arises from Augustinian thought categories. It exists only to the degree that these categories are accepted as true and valid. Indeed, Romanides rightly observes that

As the Franks became acquainted with other Latin-speaking and Greek-speaking Roman Fathers, they subordinated them all to the authority of Augustinian categories. Even the dogmas promulgated at Ecumenical Synods were replaced by Augustine's understanding of these dogmas¹⁸.

The roadways to modern Western secularity were built upon an Augustinian terrain. Even during the gradual rise of the human-worldly singular in the late Middle Ages, as in Ockham's (c. 1288-1347 AD) Nominalism in which "only singular beings are accepted as real"¹⁹ and in Frankish Catholic Scholasticism in general, Augustine reigns formatively supreme:

even if the philosophical method of Western theology was adapted to a 'Church-fied' Aristotle, the religious dogmas of the Franco-Latins as formulated by Augustine and his followers remained in essence unchangeable. The authority of Augustine was so great that neither the

¹⁸ Father John Romanides 1975.

¹⁹ Panaccio 1999, 71.

philosophy of Aristotle, nor the revolution in metaphysics of Nominalism, nor the doctrinal revolution of Protestantism were able to shake it off. On the contrary, the vast majority of Protestant theologians derive their teachings from Augustine²⁰.

And this is not the first time that Augustinian thought ‘innovates’ or, rather, ‘distorts’ ancient Greco-Roman philosophy. For “Austine’s essentialism is not that of Plato. Although aiming to correct the errors of his own dualist-materialist, pre-Christian Manichaean beliefs, Augustine seems to mould both the ancient Greek philosophy he utilizes and his consequent Platonic understanding of Christianity. Not only does he err by interpreting the mind-independent Platonic Universals (Ideas-Forms) “as *objects* existing in the mind”²¹, but most importantly (and again *contra* Plato), he turns the nature of the inner human realm from public to private²². This private space is associated with the worldly-oriented lower part of the will, i.e., the moral bedrock of multiplicity-based secular modernity and the emancipation of the individual Singular/Individual. Indeed, the modern Lutheran reclusive individual pre-exists in Augustine, which later went on to become a defining characteristic of the New Age movement”²³.

Moreover,

The essence of God can be partaken by the human intellect/soul, although in a ‘tiny manner’ compared to the divine infinity. For Christianity, this is the core of the Fall in Paradise; God (or a ‘part’ of God) becomes a creature as He is essentially experienced by a created being (even if that is a spiritual/intelligible entity and even if in the hereafter); Divine Simplicity is divisionally violated as the ontological difference between God and a redeemed human soul becomes a matter of ‘magnitude’²⁴.

Of course, as we will see, in the end this leads to nothing else except forms of idolatry – God becomes Cosmos, Cosmos becomes God, or some form of syncretism of the two. It should be remembered that in Christian dogmatics the revealed dimensions Holy Trinity constitutes the prototype of being as such (including human nature as such as well as human relations). As for the Augustinian obedience-based essentialism, its consequences echo loudly in Western modernity:

²⁰ Father John Romanides 2002, 132.

²¹ Klima 2002, 6.

²² Cary 2003, 5.

²³ Retoulas 2022, 10.

²⁴ Retoulas 2022, 9.

We are now, of course, familiar, if not over-familiar, with the view that certain traditional ways of conceiving God are alienating. The historical root of the problem, it can be argued, is to be found in Augustine's one-sided emphasis on the unity of God, and it seems to me no accident that deism and unitarianism, as well as atheism, are more characteristic of the heirs of Western than of Eastern patterns of theological thought. They derive in large measure from a tendency to modalism, in which the unity of God is so stressed at the expense of a revealed threeness that the latter is reduced to epiphenomenal or secondary status. The outcome is the tendency to swallow up the reality of the creature in that of God, with ill consequences for human freedom²⁵.

Moreover, "to the degree that its three divine Hypostases (Faces/Persons) are discernible (for Saint Augustine systematically conflates essences and hypostases), the Augustinian Holy Trinity of Father as Authority/Memory – Son as *Logos*/Reason – Holy Spirit as the Will/Self-Love (subjected to the policy of *Correctio* by the Frankish innovation of the *Filioque* 800 AD) maintains an almost Manichean-like dualistic and intra-polemical nature. Being the Holy Spirit's ontological procession (origin) from two different sources, the Father and the Son, the *Filioque* introduces dualism (two sources of self-begetting) as well as polemical essentialist antagonism into the Holy Trinity²⁶. Indeed, in his warning against the Carolingian religious hierarchy's *Filioquean* schismatic urges, Saint and Patriarch Photius (c. 810/820-893 AD) foresees the development of Nietzschean nihilism (perpetual power-centric individualization towards the *nihil*) by more than a millennium.

Moreover, if the Son is born of the Father and the Spirit proceeds both from the Father and the Son, what does then remain that is novel to the Spirit? Is it something which in turn proceeds from the Spirit? As it is deduced from their thinking, which fights against God, not only three but four, or better, infinite hypostases – as the fourth hypostasis will put into procession an additional one, and, in turn, that latter one another one, until they fall into Greek polytheism²⁷.

²⁵ Gunton 1986.

²⁶ One has only to look in Yesha'yahu/Isaiah 48:12-17: "Hearken to me, O Ya'aqov and Yisra'el whom I called, I am he; I am the first, I also am the last. ...Come near to me, hear this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there have I been: now the LORD GOD, and his spirit, has sent me. Thus says the LORD, thy redeemer, the Holy One of Yisra'el", to understand the baseless nature of the *Filioque* concoction that would have been merely laughable if it had not been actualized in history with such deadly consequences.

²⁷ Saint and Patriarch Photius, PG 102:729BC.

The creative, perpetually self-dividing, socially contingent and yet nomadically reclusive individual of modern nihilism is all there: the revolt of the wilful, merely self-loving individual is here to stay. Indeed, the *Filioque* legitimizes the forceful formative effects of Memory/Authority/Historicity and Reason upon the self-loving Will. In Frankish Modernity the assault of the Nietzschean genealogist is directed at the faculties of memory and reason: memory as authority/historicity and reason are reduced to individual will and self-love – in this last phase of Western modernity the one with more power imposes his individual will in a new modern militaristic type of loving that has found expression in what it can be called, lovism. Father Seraphim Rose's *Nihilism: The Root of the Revolution of the Modern Age* detected from relatively early on (the late 1980s) the first nihilistic veins in the modern American political-cultural landscape²⁸.

Augustine's unique conception or invention of the will constitutes the most central concept that underlies both Frankish medieval religious thought and secular modernity. While such a conception is nowhere to be found in ancient Greek philosophy and Roman Christianity²⁹, it nevertheless constitutes the key parameter in Augustine's religious theory of action and politics³⁰. According to MacIntyre, "...Augustine's epistemology was Platonic, in a version derived from Plotinus, but with a crucial difference. The intellect and the desires do not naturally move towards that good which is at once the foundation for knowledge and that from which the lesser goods flow. The will which directs them is initially perverse and needs a kind of redirection which will enable it to trust obediently in a teacher who will guide the mind towards the discovery both of its own resources and of what lies outside the mind, both in nature and in God. Hence faith in authority has to precede rational understanding"³¹ – and this authority historically was the medieval Augustinian Institution of the Religious Universal (the 'Catholic Church'). And the situation does not change much in the modern secular liberal Enlightenment. As MacIntyre rightly argues: "anyone educated into the Kantian notion of duty will, so far, have been educated into easy conformism with authority"³².

The Augustinian will is so powerful that it even re-defines the meaning of love itself: "... [while] the Essence of the Trinitarian God in Augustine is love, yet [Augustine] identifies it with the will..."³³, i.e., camouflaged

²⁸ Retoulas 2022, 8-9.

²⁹ MacIntyre 1988, 154 and 158, and Matthews 2001, 270.

³⁰ MacIntyre 1988, 154 and 158.

³¹ MacIntyre 1990b., 84, emphasis ours.

³² MacIntyre 2000, 267.

³³ Loudovikos 2006, 232; here "Essence" simply means "the defining characteristic".

power-centrism. In contrast to Greek philosophy and Roman Christianity, “love, as Augustine understands it, is not the Platonic *eros*. It consists in the first instance of the sum of our natural desires ...”³⁴. Indeed, “all [Western] Christian ethics of the Middle Ages, like those of the Fathers that inspired them, have their necessary basis in the doctrine of an indestructible free will”³⁵. Even MacIntyre who defends the ‘Aristotelian’ thought of Thomas Aquinas (1225 – 1274 AD)³⁶ and criticises Augustinianism for not providing “any adequate account of how the intellect is or was related to the good before and apart from being misled by the will”³⁷, he does not challenge the key anti-Roman Augustinian invention, the human will. On the contrary, MacIntyre argues that “because of the originality of his account of the will Augustine had to innovate linguistically as well as conceptually. ... but his elucidation of [the scriptures] is distinctive in that he is able to give an account of Paul’s doctrine in the *Romans*, for example, using a vocabulary of a kind which was not available to Paul himself. In so doing there is no doubt that he captures Paul’s meaning...”³⁸. Yet this leaves us wondering how this could have been possible considering that while Augustine attempted to write a full exegesis on the *Epistle to the Romans*, he nevertheless did not complete the task (he managed to finish only the first 7 of its 433 lines) due to the interpretation difficulties which he encountered!!!³⁹ In reality, Augustine’s conceptual innovations are intimately related to his linguistic ones since he “not only had no knowledge of Greek but he came to hate that language”⁴⁰.

³⁴ MacIntyre 1988, 154.

³⁵ Etienne Gilson 1940, *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy* (quoted in Caroll 2004, 54).

³⁶ In reality, as Goddu most aptly points out, although “medieval [Western] Aristotelians explicitly raised several questions that Aristotle’s principle had suggested”, it seems that they “put Aristotelian categories in the service of non-Aristotelian agendas” (Goddu 1999, 150).

³⁷ MacIntyre 1990b., 101.

³⁸ MacIntyre 1988, 157-8.

³⁹ Father John Romanides 2002, 133, quoting Augustine’s *Epistolae ad Romanos Exposito Inchoata*, P L 35, 2088 – 2106 and *Retractationum*, Liber I, XXV (XXIV), P L 32, 623 – 634.

⁴⁰ Father John Romanides 2002, 123. Augustine’s Greek linguistic deficit was critical in his formulation of his thought. For example, his inability to understand the difference between the Greek words, *οὐσία* (*ousia*, shared essence) and *ὑπόστασις* (*hypostasis*, individual not-shared mode of being) (*De Trinitate* (5, 8,10)) which describe the life of the Holy Trinity, led him into collapsing the latter into the former generating in that manner his essentialist view of it.

Moreover, via the Augustinian invention of the will, the enslaved-to-the-Franks Western Roman has been deprived of one of the most central human features, *autexousiotis* (self-authority). And intimately related to this and, certainly the most bestial of the Augustinian conceptions is the of human nature.

Augustine's power-centrism of grace is undoubtedly Manichaean - as Manichaean as his conception of it as a creature: for in the latter, the Divine is dichotomized into either an uncreated entity with uncreated energy (fit to God) or a lower deity with created energy relating to the material world – how Gnostic!!! Manichaean-like is also his understanding of the human will. There are times when Augustine belittles even the Manichaeans in his conceptions of evilness - for the latter only related it to matter: when he spoke of the essential nihility and perversity of the human self. ... “Augustine went so far ... as to see in the human self the negation of God. He assimilated evil to the self, and defines the self over against God”⁴¹. No surprise that the West is theophobic for its absolutist god is the god of fear. And Augustine is fully alive in Luther... What has followed can be seen in the West's highly obnoxious secularization history. Augustine's terrifying cacodoxies are nowhere to be found in the Fathers of Christianity. Today's undiscerning New-Age-type lovism is a direct antithetical reflection of Augustine's all-out darkening - equally trapping and terrorizing. [Yet in Christianity:] Nothing is evil according to its nature, according to its essence: “nothing is evil on account of its existence, but only because it has slipped away from its proper and fitting energy/operation, and from the *telos* of that energy/operation”⁴². Thus, the evil of a particular nature pertains to that nature's transgression, i.e., the deprivation of what that nature naturally possesses. So, there is no evil nature in itself, but badness/evil according to a nature is the inability to bring to completion that which is particular to that nature⁴³. So, evil relates not to what a nature is, but how that nature applies what it naturally has (the application of its natural energy). That is why: “the law has no applicability with regard to human nature but it concerns the self-authority (*autexousiotis*) of the volition/disposition (*προαίρεσις*) to be able to [freely] orient itself towards either good or evil”^{44, 45}.

The authentic relation between Hellenism and Christianity which is retained in Roman Christianity is of critical importance vis-à-vis Christianity itself. It is interesting that recent Western scholarship has begun to

⁴¹ BeDuhn 2010b., 424.

⁴² Saint Gregory Palamas 1999, 86-89.

⁴³ Saint Dionysius the Areopagitis, PG 3:728C.

⁴⁴ Saint Symeon Metaphrasis (10th century AD) (in Saint Kallistos Aggelikoudis [(14th century AD)] and Saint Symeon Metaphrasis 1997, 380-381).

⁴⁵ Retoulas 2022, 125-127.

investigate the religious passage both from the Hellenistic Age (331-31 BC) to pagan Rome, and that from pagan to Christian Rome not only in terms of differences but, above all, in relation to continuities. In the case of the former, as Rives points out, in addition to their internal differentiation the Pan-Hellenic religious tradition largely constituted the Roman one too: “*The most important traditions of the empire, those of the Greeks and the Romans shared so many religious practices and beliefs that we can reasonably talk of a single Graeco-Roman religious tradition*”⁴⁶. This was true not only in terms of religion but in terms of politics too in the sense that the Romanisation of the Hellenistic world under the conquering the Roman Empire was ‘Hellenity in another form’. As such, the passage to Roman political domination was largely unproblematic for the Hellenistic East: “*Why fear the imposition of barbarism, then, when Aeneas [of Troy]’s descendants [i.e., the Romans] began and steadily extended their subjugation of the Hellenistic world?*”⁴⁷. That is why

*the Roman takeover of Greece is not a separate part of history from the hellenistic period, not even the end of hellenistic culture – through the continuing story of Greek culture within a mature Roman empire (and later the eastern Roman or Byzantine empire, to AD 1453 and beyond)...*⁴⁸.

In the case of Roman Christianisation, Timothy Johnson’s book (2010), *Among the Gentiles: Greco-Roman Religion and Christianity*, is pioneering in identifying the continuities between pagan Greco-Roman religion and early Christianity. We should also refer to John Mark Reynolds’ *When Athens met Jerusalem: An Introduction to Classical and Christian Thought* – the expected Western misplacement of Augustinian thought within Christianity found in it notwithstanding. And Father John Romanides’ work takes the issue much further and deeper.

The Catholic scholasticism of the Middle Ages was subsequently replaced by “the [Renaissance] Humanism that followed. But Greek Humanism sees the human being as ‘linked to Transcendent Divine Realities,’ while that of the West sees the human being as ‘the highest form of existence in the universe’. From an [Roman] Orthodox perspective, this [merely] anthropocentric Humanism is essentially an attempt at deification without God, and is identified with the pride of the fallen angel, Lucifer”⁴⁹. In

⁴⁶ Rives 2007, 6, emphasis ours.

⁴⁷ MacMullen 2000, 1-2, emphasis ours.

⁴⁸ Shipley 2000, 368, emphasis ours.

⁴⁹ Dounetas 2010b., 109-110 quoting Mulloy, John J. “Hellenism and Early Christianity.” *The Dawson Newsletter*, Vol. XI, Summer 1993.

reality, despite the Renaissance's and later Enlightenment's attempts to absolve the Western human being from Augustinian and Lutheran pessimism, "[t]here is a recurring pattern in the history of the West from the eighteenth century onward in which every major failure in the human struggle for self-improvement and liberation is greeted as new evidence for the dogma of original sin"⁵⁰. It is only Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the only Western thinker – a modern Roman – who, to a large extent, transcended the doctrinal plague of original sin and whose philosophy played an important role in the formation of Kemalism.

In his excellent book, *The Wreck of Western Culture: Humanism Revisited*, John Carroll vividly describes the shortcomings of Western Renaissance humanism and the subsequent Western religious-ideological trajectory due to their problematic relation to ancient Greek philosophy. Indeed, Knight aptly summarises that trajectory:

'Here I stand and I can do no other', announced Luther, striking a stridently individualistic pose premised upon an adaptation of the Augustinian idea of will and a Thomist idea of conscience. This pose was later adopted by Kant, and later again, by that peculiarly ascetic Nietzschean, Weber. It expresses for Luther and Kant a certainty other and greater than the certainties that plain persons derived from traditional kinds of authority and reasoning. For Luther this certainty could be based only on faith in divine command and calling and was unaffected by temporal acts or vocational roles. For Kant such certainty provided bases for an alternative and superior kind of practical reasoning oriented to individual acts in isolation from social practices. By the time of Weber, the categorical imperatives of conscience remained but appeared alien to reason. After the death of God a disenchanted, demoralized world affords no basis for an ethic of responsibility other than the individual will. Either duty or power can, it seems, be willed as values which individuals might enunciate within it can be traced back (as Weber himself did) to the Reformation's separations of individual from society and of faith from reason, continued as these were in capitalism's bifurcation of market and state and the Enlightenment's bifurcation of science and metaphysics. This is the genealogy of separation of social science from moral philosophy, a history that enables social scientists to be untroubled in their presuppositions by the administration of Auschwitz and moral philosophers to be untroubled in theirs by the alienation of workers⁵¹.

⁵⁰ MacIntyre 2000, 188-189). For a comparative study of the Frankish (Augustinian Catholic and Protestant) and Roman understandings of the doctrine of the original sin, see Father John Romanides 2008a. and 2010.

⁵¹ Knight in his introduction to Alasdair MacIntyre's works (Knight 1998, 25).

All in all, the Augustinian formative substratum permeates Western secular modernity and its epistemology. As Fitzgerald states on the presence of philosophical dualism in Western modernity:

These rhetorically-constructed distinctions between the religious and what falls outside religion (which logically must be non-religion, or domains and practices which are deemed to be non-religious) are supported by other problematic binaries such as natural and supernatural, inner and outer, spiritual and material, soul and body, private and public, metaphysical and empirical, faith and knowledge, and arguably female and male. All of these binaries, taken on their own, one by one, are inherently problematic, but they operate in circular fashion to keep the semantic chain rolling. Each binary displaces the other in a continual displacement of meaning⁵².

Tread carefully here lest, thinking that the unifying, transcending and way-out element of these binarities is naked willed power, the ouroboros devours you aeonian·ly.

The mainstream study of Islam bases itself on the Augustinian conflict-ridden dualism of the ‘essentialist universal versus individualistic singular’. As, for example, Nielsen aptly argues

In Orientalism we encounter a reduction of the parts to the whole (local phenomena are explained by reference to the essence of Islam), while in anti-Orientalism there is a reduction of the whole to its constituent parts (Islam is disseminated in local events)⁵³.

In my view, Roman Islam can play a key role in bridging the seemingly antithetical gap between the Orientalist and anti-Orientalist approaches into a more harmonious whole, if only because “each opposite is neither more nor less than its opposite”⁵⁴.

In the light of our discussion above, it hardly comes as a surprise that, despite its universalistic terminology, Bruce’s secularisation thesis follows a Frankish Protestant rationale within the confines of a non-Roman Augustinian-derived essentialist framework - one similar to that of its parent theory (i.e., modernisation theory). In fact, Bruce’s paradigm is a synthesis of the works of earlier modernisation theorists such as Ernest Gellner and David Martin, finding its origins in Marx, Weber and Durkheim⁵⁵. As Schön aptly argues, “[a]nother problematic inheritance from Weber is Bruce’s

⁵² Fitzgerald 2008.

⁵³ Nielsen 2000.

⁵⁴ Ibn Arabi 1997, 102.

⁵⁵ Kaufmann 2006, 2.

reliance on Protestant ethics as the central factor in modernization. ... To make a case for Jewish-Protestant exceptionalism, Bruce tries to argue that the ancient Greek and Roman beliefs in hordes of gods or spirits who were whimsical erratic despots often behaving in an arbitrary fashion and - *horribile dictu* - even mated with humans must somehow have impaired Greek and Roman rationality (p.6). This would be just amusing if it wasn't such an obvious violation of Bruce's own standards to give not only value-neutral, but value-free sociological descriptions and explanations"⁵⁶ – i.e., it fails by its own standards vis-à-vis universality.

Ecumenical Romanity and Roman Christianity

As we have already seen, no state named Byzantium by either its population or its government ever existed. In reality, “the people of the ‘Byzantine Empire’ had no idea that they were Byzantine. They regarded themselves as the authentic continuators of the Roman world: the Romans living in *Romania*”⁵⁷. As the lawful inheritor of Elder Rome, the Roman Empire of Emperor Constantine I, with its capital *Nova Roma*, Constantinople, “is the only empire which did not become but was born a world power, as it is the only empire which assumed the responsibility of representing – by itself – heaven on earth. ‘One God in the heavens, one Master on earth, the Christian Emperor’ ...”⁵⁸.

Certainly, the claim to universality (*ecumenicity*) is a fundamental characteristic of the Empire, a peculiarity of the Roman world domination, of which Byzantium is seen as inheritor and continuer. The Roman Empire, the area of the *Orbis Romanus*, obeys only one authority, only one *taxis* (order), which is an expression of coherence and unity. The Emperor is the symbol and the guarantor of this unity, whether this is called *pax* (‘peace’) or *ordo/taxis* (‘order’). ... This Imperial circle, the ‘*orbis*’ which is identical with the Ecumene and outside of which begins the indecency of the non-(truly)-established nations, has as its centre not just an Eternal City, like that of Rome, but a Reigning City, the first in the order of cities, the beginning and the end ... The Empire, with Constantinople at its centre, is foreign to the ‘*chefferie de villages*’, i.e., the fragmentation of the Christian West, which George Duby vividly highlights in his relevant work⁵⁹.

⁵⁶ Schön 2002, 2. In reality, the reference to Judaism here is to a Frankish pseudo-Judaism, i.e., Judaism understood within essentially Augustinian thought categories and paired with their Protestant offshoot.

⁵⁷ Fox 1996.

⁵⁸ Arveler [- Glykatzi] 2001, 15.

⁵⁹ Arveler [- Glykatzi], 2001, 13-14.

The modern term for describing the nature of Roman Christian religion-state relations, *συναλληλία* (*sinallilia*), is a compound of the prefix ‘*sin-*’, which translates as ‘co-’ and *allilos*, which means ‘each other’⁶⁰. The alternative term *ὁμόνοια* (*omonía*) stems from *omoios* (same, similar) and *nous* (spiritual heart/mind), (i.e., having the same heart/mind)⁶¹. Both highlight a quality of harmony, co-existence, co-habitation, mutual support and reciprocity, two things brought together but different in their nature. In the Roman Empire, the concept of empire possessed a very different meaning to the one espoused by Augustinian papism. The metaphors of the Emperor as an ‘Apostle’ of Christ, of divine kingship and of the imperial court as the image of heaven were linked with “the general Eastern Christian emphasis on the ideas of incarnation, deification (*theosis*), and divine-human participation as the central metaphors of the Church”⁶²- metaphors as living images that is. In fact, the basis of the Roman religion-state relation, *sinallilia*, was the notion of the ‘inter-encapsulation’ (*alliloperichorisis*), we have already seen, i.e., a constant unifying inter- movement within unity without violation of their common essence and their incommunicable individualities retaining properly the powers of love, intellect (includes emotions) and power in their proper relation. Individual multiplicity (the theophilosophical singular) and essential unity (the theophilosophical universal) are understood as complementary and mutually supportive principles of being as such: “Maximus the Confessor asserted that *διαφορά* (difference) is at the core of all being, and that it is good”⁶³ – and difference and division are different... *Sinallilia* even refers to the nature of the *revealed* Divinity itself, both with regard to the singularity of each of the Three Persons of the Trinity, and with regard to the ‘non-confusion’ of divine and human nature in the hypostatic Oneness of the incarnated Christ. This is at the core of the nature of the Holy Trinity as the inter-encapsulating Father, Son/*Logos* and Holy Spirit⁶⁴ - of course we can have no idea of what it means in itself as long as we deal with naturally uncreated realities like the divine natures and the hypostases for example.

Reflecting the Roman view of true being, this union allows the state to be religious and worldly at the same time without contradiction. “The relations between the worldly and the spiritual authorities deeply affect the political and ideological orientations of every epoch and define the

⁶⁰ For the use of the term *sinallilia* see, for example, Metallinos 2000, 28, Kitsikis 2005, and Dounetas 2010b.

⁶¹ See Metallinos 2000, 28.

⁶² Webb 1992, 12.

⁶³ Tataryn 1997, 205.

⁶⁴ See Ware 1997.

behaviour of the Byzantine people. Their interdependence, which expresses itself during the whole span of the life of the Empire, constitutes a key side of Byzantine civilisation, ... [In general,] the nature of the relations between the Byzantine state and church ... were based on a constant and mutually accepted solidarity ...”⁶⁵. In the Roman understanding, while “as a Christian, the Emperor depends on the Patriarch, [and] as a citizen of the State, the Patriarch depends on the Emperor”, i.e., inter-dependence and unity, at the same time “this fact presupposes the absolute separation, the clear differentiation between the imperial authority and the clergy, something that took place in Byzantium”⁶⁶. As Arveler-Glykatzi states, this separation was established by ‘Byzantine’ law and it was historically respected, despite numerous attempts by both sides to subvert it⁶⁷. Gradually from the late 320s AD onwards, the Roman legal system was, in a similar way, ‘*sinallilistically*’ constructed, differentiating between the Church’s *kanones*, the canon law pertaining ultimately to spiritual improvement, and the state’s *nomoi*, the ‘worldly’ legislative statutes⁶⁸.

Sinallilia expresses a living differentiated union, religious but not theocratic, worldly but not secular in the modern sense. Kitsikis most aptly describes the Emperor as a king “not by God’s approval, permission and power (*ἐλέω Θεοῦ*) but by the approval, permission and power of the people [Gr *laos*], the ‘people of God’ (*ἐλέω λαοῦ, τοῦ «λαοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ»*), the chosen people of the new Israel of the *Romioi* [Roman Christians], in the sense of the absolute unity of God’s people, which recognises no internal distinction between the rulers and the ruled”⁶⁹. The Roman Emperor’s authority did not stem “from the ‘Sacred’ [in the Western sense], yet the ‘Sacred’ was expressed by the ‘people’s voice’ [directly in the various political factions that expressed their opinions primarily in the Hippodrome] and the agreement of the military, administrative and ecclesiastical hierarchies of the state and of the shadowy power of the senate”⁷⁰. It is also characteristic of the religious nature of the overall framework in which these relations were actualised that, in the Roman texts, these relations are not described,

⁶⁵ Arveler [- Glykatzi], 1992, 148-9.

⁶⁶ Arveler [- Glykatzi] 1992, 149-50.

⁶⁷ Arveler [- Glykatzi] 1992, 150. Yet “these [attempts] were the work of individuals, not the result of the institutional arrangements”. [*Ibid.*]

⁶⁸ Dounetas 2010b., 149-157.

⁶⁹ Kitsikis 2001, 32.

⁷⁰ Sfaellos 1977, 28. “Of the 93 Emperors during the 1123 years of the Empire, 41 were proclaimed by revolutionary [popular and/or military] means. ... And for 452 years (as a total of different periods) of its 1123-year lifespan, the Empire was governed through *direct* revolution...” [*ibid.*].

as in modernity, as *religion-state* relations but as relations between the clerical hierarchy (*ιεραρχία*, the sacred authority) and *basilia* (*βασίλεια*, the royal authority)⁷¹. This is because both types of authority, each with its own function, were seen as forming, with the rest of society, the *Ecclesia*, i.e., the Body of Christ. Expressing Roman Christianity's dualist monism by uncreated divine energy/operations, it is "the Clergy and the Royalty: the former serves the Sacred while the latter governs human affairs; both of them, though, emanate from a Single Authority [, the Trinitarian God]"⁷².

Sinallilia intrinsically relates to the concepts both of divine *oikonomia* and of *taxis* (order) which for "the Byzantine[s] permeate the totality of the principles and virtues which govern the whole of creation and ought to govern society, the church and the state. They necessarily govern the destiny of the world in all its forms. In other words, they possess an ecumenical character"⁷³. As we have seen, the concept of divine *oikonomia* denotes the divine plan of salvation for the created, that is, their uni-directional and teleological movement towards God. *Oikonomia* involves the continuous actualisation of God's incarnation through the reason-representing divine *Logos-logoi* of things in historical life as the realisation of God's love for the human being⁷⁴. Along with its status within the cosmological-soteriological 'system', the concept came to be directly embodied in everyday Roman life as transcending and ameliorating the severity of mere legalism by exhibiting a love-originating understanding and moderation⁷⁵. As we shall see, this latter meaning corresponds to the Ottoman concept of *istimâlet*.

The concept of *taxis* was a *mimesis* (imitation) and a reflection of "the heavenly *taxis*, the order of the true world"⁷⁶ on the created cosmos. "*Earthly institutions, both ecclesiastical and temporal, were considered to mirror the order of the universe, the cosmic array created by God*"⁷⁷. The seemingly dualistic relation between the heavenly order (the religious) and the actual cosmic order (the worldly) was bridged by incorporating transcendence into a dualistic monism by way of the Perfect Human Being

⁷¹ Metallinos 2000, 26-9.

⁷² Emperor Justinian (483 – 565 AD) in Dounetas 2010b., 145.

⁷³ Arveler [- Glykatzi] 1992, 155.

⁷⁴ Meyendorff 1974, 88.

⁷⁵ Meyendorff 1974, 89. In Augustinian-type discourses, this 'amelioration' was naturally yet wrongly interpreted as 'exception to the rule' erroneously identified with the legalistic term, *dispensatio* ("exception to the law granted by the proper authority").

⁷⁶ Kazhdan and Constable 1982, 158.

⁷⁷ Kazhdan and Constable 1982, 61, emphasis ours.

by nature, Christ and his Perfect Human Beings in *theosis* by grace (the Saints, known and unknown, male and female)⁷⁸. Emperor Constantine VII (r. 913 – 959 AD) stated in his essay *On the Royal Taxis*: “May the Royal Authority, exercised in *taxis* and dignity, reproduce the movement and the harmony with which the Creator imbues the whole Universe”⁷⁹. It is not accidental that Roman Christianity is encapsulated by the notion of *ἡ τῶν πάντων ἐνότης* (the unity of all beings/existence)⁸⁰.

It is important to note here that in Roman Christianity, the reference to the heavenly order pertains only to the emanation of the mode of divine Being in the created world and not to the revelation of God’s essence as such, which remains absolutely and forever inaccessible to any and every created being (human beings, angels, spirits, hearts, intellects, matter, etc):

But the energies are multiple/differentiated, yet the essence is simple/unitary. As for us, we say that we know our God from the energies; while we do not testify that we near His essence as such. For His energies descend to us, yet His essence remains unapproachable⁸¹.

The total inaccessibility and absolutely secret life of Divinity as a mystery corresponds to the highest part of the triadic scheme upon which the notion of the Human Being as such is based: *Love/Secret/Heart — Reason/Intelligible/Intellect — Bodily/Sensible/Senses*. It is by way of divine uncreated energies that (Biblical) Revelation becomes an inescapable and integral component of Christian religiosity. The Mystery of God (Revelation) is brought together and inviolately unified into a triadic scheme of the secret-intelligible-bodily, of which only the last two parts represent the objects of philosophical and intellectual inquiry. As for love, it is “the good state of the soul in which the knowledge of God is not exchanged for anything else. ... When, by the *eros* of love, the *nous* [the intellect as the ‘heart’] migrates towards God, then it does not perceive anything else but God ... All the virtues in the *nous* are in synergy towards the divine *eros*...”⁸². And “the one who loves God cannot but love every human being too”⁸³.

In Roman Christianity, the *telos* of the human being is not merely piety but *θεώσις* (*theosis*, deification)⁸⁴. *Theosis* denotes a state of constant and

⁷⁸ See Thunberg 1995.

⁷⁹ Arveler [- Glykatzi] 1992, 168.

⁸⁰ See Christodoulos (Archimandrite) *et al.* (1997).

⁸¹ Saint Basil the Great, PG 32:869AB.

⁸² Maximus the Confessor 1978, 29 – 31.

⁸³ Maximus the Confessor 1978, 31.

⁸⁴ Meyendorff in Palamas 1983.

unconfused Divine–human unification, in which the human being as a whole (both soul and body) partakes the uncreated divine energy in the human constitution of the Theanthropic God Jesus Christ (*the* Son of God) according to the bestowals of the God-Holy-Spirit from the God-Father – without ever come to ‘touch’ the divine Essence, i.e., God as He is in Himself; the human being becomes god (*a* son of God) without naturally becoming God as such and without ever living his/her human root. A union that is neither hypostatic nor essential, but energetic, i.e., one of uncreated energy. “God and man are exemplars of one another, says Maximus [the Confessor]. Their relationship lies in the field of imitation, of capacity of mutual adaptation of the modes of existence”⁸⁵. *Theosis* pertains to the true knowledge of the highest form of the Divine Universal as the Love-based Highest Good. This type of knowledge possesses a lived-out, existential and purely love-centred character. At the centre of *theosis* lies the notion of the human being as having *αὐτεξουσιότης* (*autexousiotis*) or possessing the moral freedom, not simply to will, but above all to govern oneself, a conception at the centre of Roman Christianity. In Roman Christianity, the human being possesses not only intellectual self-sufficiency but self-authority and, in fact, non-delimitation⁸⁶.

Theosis also relates to the concept of the Church which, above all, is understood as *the community of the saints*, i.e., those who having attained *theosis*⁸⁷. In Roman Christianity, as Romanides states, “For the Church Fathers, when we say the dogma of the Holy Trinity is the theophanies”⁸⁸, thus bridging together the personal and the authoritative institutional. The road to Sainthood as a struggle for attaining the real and perfect self through *theosis* is open to all, male and female. In his writings, Saint Gregory Palamas struggled “to affirm that this goal is not reserved to isolated ‘mystics’, but is, in fact, identical with the Christian faith itself and, therefore, offered to all members of the Church, in virtue of their baptism”⁸⁹. In other words, *theosis* possesses a personal character, one pertaining both to the individual singular and the social universal at the same time.

At the human level, Roman *sinallilia* reflects Christianity’s love-bridged dichotomy of *Soul* (i.e., the Heart as the locus of Divine theophany and the Intellect as the locus of Reason) and *Body* (Power-related) in a union without violation of their different natures in the harmony of human powers

⁸⁵ Thunberg 1995, 431.

⁸⁶ Christou 1980.

⁸⁷ See Vasileios (Archimandrite) 1997.

⁸⁸ Father John Romanides (in Metropolitan Hierotheos (Vlachos) (Metropolitan) 2010, 103).

⁸⁹ Meyendorff in Palamas 1983.

(love-intellect-power). The upper part of the Soul, the Heart/Nous, pertains purely to divine manifestation (i.e., the religious), serving as the unifier of the incorporeal (intelligible) and the corporeal (the worldly). It is through the love-based theophanies in *theosis* that the proper and love-based heavenly unified *taxis* is (re-)established in the Created World, which is at the same time reason-based due to its 'Creation in the *Logos*-Word'. As we have already said, the Christian tradition does not identify the deep heart, or else, the *nous*, i.e., the human faculty which perceives the Divine with emotions, spiritualist experiences, intellectual/intelligible functions. The intellect per se has no role in theophanic experiences which lead to *theosis*, except for a partial *a posteriori* commentary-like function, which can in no wise explain them. In fact, the rational/intellect-related part of the human being, the human *logos* is 'frozen' in ineffable awe when the human being unites with God. Theophanic experiences fall outside the nature and competence of the intellect as such. The intellect constitutes an inviolable and separate part of the religious as a whole but does not exhaust it. Irrespective of its eloquence, rational inquiry is not identical with religious experience and knowledge. The maximum jurisdiction of the human soul vis-à-vis God is, when operates properly, to point to God's existence but never is the determinant of union with God, that takes place continuously via human nature yet *supra* human nature. In other words, the crystallisation of the Church dogmas - which can be expressed rationally – is not identical with God's mystery in itself:

What is important is the perception of the relation between the reality [experienced in *theosis*] and the names-meanings [attributed to it by the intellect]. The mystery [of God] remains a mystery. [Thus,] we do not express the mystery itself, but the dogmas relating to it. [So,] we talk about the dogmas of the mystery of the Holy Trinity, not about the mystery of the Holy Trinity itself⁹⁰.

In the light of our overall discussion, Dounetas provides us with the most comprehensive definition of *sinallilia* in theophilosophical terms, one that both circumscribes and transcends-by-inclusion the concept itself:

The Byzantine *Sinallilia*, or *Simfonia* [Mutual Agreement] is the result of the understanding that the State is a servant of God for the sake of His Church. It is the manifestation of the harmony of the divine energies, which are divided indivisibly in the *Creational* [the State] and *Appropriational* [the *Ecclesia*] Kingdoms. Just as the material structure of a church building protects the believers from the wild elements of earthly nature, the Christian

⁹⁰ Father John Romanides (in Metropolitan Hierotheos (Vlachos) 2010, 105).

Roman state forms a favourable environment for the believers and protects them from the unruly elements of human nature. *Sinallilia* does not constitute an ideal system, since government as such is but a practical measure against the Fall. The ultimate aim of the Christian polity is *theosis*, in which the State and consequently *sinallilia* are abolished. Moreover, the Church does not depend on the State for its functioning and continuation. It is perhaps for these reasons that there is no specific law or dogma which comprehensively defines the mutual agreement between the two Powers [i.e., Church and State]. There *does* exist, however, a coherence in the thought of the Fathers, the Emperors and the subjects of *Romania*⁹¹.

Christianity is the Ultimate Perfection of Anarchy in the Anarchical *Archē*.

In a discussion on Greek and Turkish secularism, Öktem points out the global exceptionalism and the apparent similarities between the 'Byzantine'-modern-Greek and Ottoman-Kemalist typology of state-religion relations⁹². In his article, 'Note sur les relations Eglise-Etat en Grèce', Mayer identifies the presence of *sinallilia* in modern Greek religion-state relations⁹³. Similarly, both Metallinos and Kitsikis recognise the existence of *sinallilia* in modern Greek state-religion relations in general, while pointing out the distorted form of those relations, which they rightly attribute to Catholic-Protestant-Enlightenment influences⁹⁴. In reality, we can talk about a kind of inversed Roman *sinallilia*, in the sense that while the religious and the worldly are conceptually separate and the religious remains both public and private at the same time, the overall framework now is not religious but national-worldly. Let us see how the Roman Christian *sinallilia* relates to the Ottoman Islamic conception of religion-state relations and modern Kemalist *laiklik*.

Islamic *Vahdet-i Vücut Tasavvuf*: A Neglected Roman Religiosity⁹⁵

Generally speaking, until very recently, the subject of religiosity in Ottoman society and especially the position of *vahdet-i vücut tasavvuf*- has

⁹¹ Dounetas 2010b, 144-145. Saint John Chrysostom's concepts of the Creational (*κατὰ δημιουργίαν*) and Appropriational (*κατ' οἰκείωσιν*) Kingdoms of God are treated by Dounetas (ibid., 132-135).

⁹² Öktem 2002, 254-256.

⁹³ Mayer 1999.

⁹⁴ Metallinos 2000 and Kitsikis 2005.

⁹⁵ I would like to thank Professor James Morris for his comments on the doctrinal aspects of *vahdet-i vücut tasavvuf*, particularly vis-à-vis secularisation, and my designation of it as Roman.

remained not only neglected but basically ostracised from mainstream Western historical and political approaches to Islam. This situation essentially stems from the inter-encapsulation between the Western moral philosophical-epistemological and political interest trajectories. Just as Roman Christianity did not ever feature centre stage in Western academia, the evolution of Roman Islam was never, except sporadically, a main subject of study. The vacillation between the essentialist rationalism of Orientalism and the multiplicity-based power-centric de-constructionism of anti-Orientalism is so prevalent in overall Anglophone Western academic approach to Islam that, except in very specialist and usually spiritually-oriented publications, even Islamic ‘mysticism’ and its key representative like and Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn al-‘Arabī al-Ṭā’ī al-Ḥātimī (1165 -1240 AD, known as Muhyiddin (the revivifier of religion) and the Şeyh al-Akbar (the Greatest Master)⁹⁶) are understood within the confines of this pendulum. As Morris aptly remarks this understanding of ‘Sufism’ relates to

the assumption of a vaguely ‘pantheistic’ – or at the very least ‘immanentist’ – focus on the locus and forms of awareness of the ultimate reality, usually seen (at least in the prevalent Anglo-Saxon conceptions) as reflecting a radically ‘individualistic’, personalistic perspective explicitly divorced from any essential social and cultural ties with ritual, authority, tradition, practice and the like⁹⁷.

Moreover, all in all, mainstream modern Western academia tends to identify Islam with ‘Arab thought’, which it strangely terms ‘orthodox’. As Holbrook argues, it is Western “academic pre-occupation with a tradition of ‘Arab’ thought – composed in Arabic though not necessarily by Arabs, deprecating Ibn Arabi in times felt to evince political and intellectual decline for which Turkish [i.e., Ottoman] rule is often retroactively blamed – which bequeaths us his international reputation as a heretic”⁹⁸. And the Arab connection is usually coupled with or replaced by a Persian one, like in William Chittick. As Holbrook stated in 1994: “In a queer accident of scholarly history, Sufism”, a term that in its current use Holbrook rightly considers too loose to be of any practical analytical value, “has more than not been described as a Persian phenomenon of Arabic heritage ... Recent books about Sufism in languages spoken west of Istanbul either do not

⁹⁶ It is in relation to this title that Ibn Arabi’s theophilosophy is often termed Akbarian.

⁹⁷ Morris 1995, 44.

⁹⁸ Holbrook 1992, 18.

mention Ottoman Sufism or devote very few pages to it. There is no comprehensive account in any language of the establishment of dervish orders in Anatolia and the Ottoman west”⁹⁹. Gradually, after the mid-18th century, with the Western expansion into Ottoman Arab lands, “globalised, [this Arab-centric Orientalist paradigm] has been re-imported by Islamist discourse in those countries whose populations are primarily Muslim; they too have assimilated the [Western] European Arabic-centric view of their own past, just as the European Romantic view of national language and literature was assimilated a century ago”¹²¹⁰⁰.

In reality, the only Islamic milieu where we can validly talk about an Islamic ‘orthodoxy’ (meaning of ‘right opinion’ and ‘right glory/energy/operations’), in the sense of a centrally state-related doctrinal religiosity, was the Ottoman Empire, which possessed a fully bureaucratised religious hierarchy, and yet, as we will see, its nature was far from a merely legalistic one. In other words, the most plausible candidate to represent ‘Islamic Orthodoxy’ is the pre-mid-18th- century Ottoman Empire, which nevertheless does not fit the Orientalist model of ‘orthodox’ Islam. Politically speaking, this Roman Ottoman *vahdet-i vücut tasavvuf* orthodoxy, as we will see in detail, has been related with politically anti-Western as well as anti-Oriental (Arab, Persian, Far-Eastern) formations and movements in both the pre-modern and the modern era.

Roman Islam: ‘The Unity of Being’

Roman *vahdet-i vücut tasavvuf* is Koranic¹⁰¹. It represents a Koranic path to the divine Real as a hierarchical holistic and indivisible unity of three main differentiated components, Revelation (Theophanic Love/Heart), Philosophy (Reason/Intellect) and Divine Law (Power/*Şeriat*/Sense/Body). By the time of Ibn Arabi, *kelam* (theology-philosophy) and Islamic philosophy were pre-eminently understood in an Aristotelian fashion. Ibn Arabi himself wrote his *Divine Governance of the Human Kingdom* probably around 1194 in Andalusia after he had read the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secret of Secrets* (*Sirrul Esrar*)¹⁰². The work presents “the metaphorical correspondences between the mundane political authority of *amīr* s and *kātib* s and *qādī* s, on

⁹⁹ Holbrook 1994, 10.

¹⁰⁰ Holbrook 2002.

¹⁰¹ See Nettler 2003.

¹⁰² Ibn Arabi 1997, 3. The text served as a governing guide to Ottoman Sultans in the pre-modern period. For example, Sultan Ahmed III (1703 - 1730) ordered its translation into Turkish, a task assigned to Muhammed el-Hamîdî, under the title *Keşfü'l-Estâr an Sirru'l-Esrâr* (Tahralı in Ibn Arabi 2001, xiv).

the one hand, and the esoteric anthropology of the standard Hellenistic scheme of microcosm, based on a faculty-psychology of Neoplatonic Aristotelianism, on the other”¹⁰³.

Roman *Vahdet-i Vücud*: The Dialectics of Divine Absence and Presence

Just as in Roman Christianity, at the centre of Roman *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* lies the unbridgeable essential differentiation between God (Uncreated) and Other-than-God (Created Cosmos). God’s essence is categorically and absolutely inaccessible by any Created entity in ontological, logical or any other terms. Ibn Arabi employs the term *tanzîh* to describe this utter incomparability and inaccessibility of God¹⁰⁴. This chasmic divide between God and the Created excludes *a priori* any type of dualistic understandings as such of real being, like, for example, Pantheism, Manichaeism, Gnosticism, or Bogomilism. The principle of *tanzîh* (incomparability) gives Roman *tasavvuf* its apophatic character. It is an inescapable ever-present principle which constantly informs all other components of Roman *tasavvuf*.

Yet, the principle of *tanzîh* is inter-encapsulating-ly coupled with the equally important and inescapable principle of *tashbîh* (similarity), which designates God’s immanence in and similarity to the Created. In fact, the inter-encapsulating dyadic monad of the opposites of *tanzîh* (incomparability) and *tashbîh* (similarity), which lies at the core of *vahdet-i vücud* (unity of being) constantly describes both Creator and Created in themselves and their relations (ontological, cosmological, epistemological, etc): “every entity qualified by existence is it/not it. The whole cosmos is He/not He. The Real manifest through form is He/not He. He is the limited who is not limited, the seen who is not seen”¹⁰⁵. Of course, this is simply reminiscent of the lived-out testimony of the divine Saint Symeon the New Theologian, who moved in and out the Realm of God almost at will (with God’s satisfactory permission):

¹⁰³ Elmore in his review of Ibn Arabi (1997), *Divine Governance of the Human Kingdom*, [interpreted by ShaykhTosun Bayrak], Fons Vitae, Louisville (in the *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabi Society*, Vol. XXV, (1999), 100–103).

¹⁰⁴ Chittick 1989, 9.

¹⁰⁵ *Futūhāt* (II 379.3) (in Chittick 1989, 116). The *tanzîh-tashbîh* reality permeates existence, including ‘practical’ matters (for its ‘reflection’ on the religious duty of fasting, see Ibn Arabi (1999), *The Secrets of the Fast*, Le Éditions Al-Bouraq, Beirut [(trans. – intro) Gilis, Charles-André, (English trans.) Beale, Richard and Todd, Richard]).

You are whole unmoved, yet ever-moving,
 You are whole outside of creation,
 And whole in all creation,
 Whole filling up all the universes,
 You being whole outside all of them,
Supra everything...¹⁰⁶.

The inter-encapsulation of Non-Identification/Identification is the root of all Being:

God is in everything and in none at all¹⁰⁷,

Or on another occasion:

And being beyond everything,
 the one who sees Him
 is alone with the Alone One;
 seeing not even a thing of that
 which can be seen by the bodily eyes and
 of that which the nous/thought can see;
 that one sees the Trinity alone¹⁰⁸.

Which in turn reminds us of the well-known modern Western Corbian work (first published in the 1950s) relating to Sufism – which yet carries very many of the above-mentioned exegetical pathologies as it is basically an attempt to fit Sufism and Islam in general in neo-Gnostic categories.

Epistemologically, the *tanzih-tashbīh* inter-encapsulation both delimits and transcends (by inclusion, not total elimination) the dichotomising rationalistic law of the ‘either ... or ...’ contradiction forming the overarching logical law of correlation between affirmation and negation: ‘both ... and ...’. Both the unifying law of correlation and the conception of reason that are found in Roman *tasavvuf*, while commensurable with their Roman Christian counterparts¹⁰⁹, do not correspond to the divisive character of Western Christian and Enlightenment concepts of ‘contemplative versus instrumental’ rationality.

¹⁰⁶ Saint Symeon the New Theologian 1990, 150-151 (Hymn 15:63-66).

¹⁰⁷ Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 4:353A.

¹⁰⁸ Saint Symeon the New Theologian 1990, 338-339 (Hymn 23:425-427).

¹⁰⁹ For the centrality of this law in Roman Christianity, see Matsoukas 1998, 288.

The Roman *Tasavvuf* *Oikonomia*: The Return of the *Cosmos* to God and the *Telos* of the Created

In Roman *tasavvuf*, Creation, whether pre-existing (before genesis) or actualised (after genesis) is based on the differentiated syzygy of divine love and knowledge since “[God] has always loved His creatures, just as He has always known them”¹¹⁰, i.e., love and knowledge inter-encapsulate into a dualist monism. Unceasing and un-replicated creation¹¹¹ and perpetual motion¹¹² are embedded characteristics of the engendered creation both within itself and as itself. Yet *telos* of the Created as such is not at all random. It follows God’s salvific plan of the “compulsory return (*rujū’ idtirārī*)” of the engendered Creation as a whole to Him¹¹³ - which is reminiscent of the *oikonomia* of Roman Orthodox Christianity.

The Triadic Order of Existence: The Reflection of the immanent God in the Created

In Roman *tasavvuf*, Creation possesses an inherently triadic existence: “the whole cosmos is confined to *three mysteries* (*asrār*): its substance, its forms and transmutation (*istihāla*). *There is no fourth affair* (*amr*)”¹¹⁴. The created is seen as a cosmic mirror on which ‘the Face of God’ is reflected. The concept of face (*wajh*) designates the ‘essence’ and the reality of a thing or a person¹¹⁵. The face is the most eminent thing in the manifest domain of the human being, because it is the Presence of all the non-manifest and manifest faculties. The reflected Face of God pertains exclusively to *tanzih* (i.e., as far as God manifest Himself). Everything in the cosmos reflects God’s Face. “For God says ‘He is with you wherever you are’ [Koran] (57:4); ‘Whithersoever you turn, there is the face of God’ [Koran] (2:115), and the ‘face’ of a thing is its reality and essence”¹¹⁶. Yet these reflections cannot but at the same time take place within the confines and as part of the *three mysteries* (*asrār*) by and through which the whole cosmos is confined and ‘expressed’¹¹⁷.

¹¹⁰ *Futūhāt* (II 329.5) (in Chittick 1998, 22).

¹¹¹ *Futūhāt* (II 677.30) (in Chittick 1989, 97).

¹¹² *Futūhāt* (II 629.28) (in Chittick 1989, 102).

¹¹³ *Futūhāt* (IV 298.20) (in Chittick 1998, 204).

¹¹⁴ *Futūhāt* (III 254.23) (in Chittick 1989, 100).

¹¹⁵ It is interesting that the Greek word for face, *πρόσωπον* means also ‘person’ (e.g., the three faces/persons of the Roman Christian Holy Trinity).

¹¹⁶ *Futūhāt* (I 405.27) (in Chittick 1989, 343).

¹¹⁷ *Futūhāt* (III 254.23) (in Chittick 1989, 101).

The triadicity of the whole cosmos is simply the reflected mystical Triadic Unity of the One God. “Ibn Arabi expresses this idea very daringly in the following line: “My Beloved is three, although He is One””¹¹⁸. In a similar fashion, Ibn Arabi says “the ones who know their Lord have three sides to their hearts”¹¹⁹. Taking into account that, for the human being who has united with the Divine, the heart is considered the locus of divine manifestation, the mirror which reflects only God, we see that the reflected Divine has a triadic nature, although it is one. The first Face is called *the Lord, Allah* or *Father* represents the Commanding and Generating Principle establishing a Beginning and an End in the governing of the Cosmos¹²⁰. The second Face is represented by the *Muhammadan Reality* that designates the immanent Principle of Love (*vita mystica*) -Theoretical Reason (*vita contemplativa*)-Practical Reason (*vita practica*) ruling the Cosmos stipulating its purpose and *telos* (the Name/*Logos* and its names/*logoi*). Ibn Arabi’s *Logos* (*Kalimah*)¹²¹ relates to the All-Merciful as Word/Speech. Ibn Arabi refers to the *Logos* as the Reality of Realities (*Haqiqatu’l Haqa’iq*), the Reality of Mohammed, the Spirit of Mohammed, the First Intellect, the Most Exalted Pen, the Perfect Human Being, the Real Adam, the Origin of the Universe, the Pole (*Quth*, on which all Creation revolves), the Intermediary (between God and Creation), the Sphere of Life, the Servant of the All-embracing One, etc.

The third Face, *the Breath of the All- ‘Merciful* or the *Holy Spirit (Rūh al-Qudus)*¹²² is the Life-giving and Knowledge-emanating Principle-Source and stands in the cosmos, in this case representing the Body of God, as Spirit- Soul stands as the governor of the Body¹²³. It is interesting that the

¹¹¹ Affifi 1964, 87, quoting from “*Tarjumānu’l Ashwāq*, trns. R.A. Nicholson, 70-71; cf. *Futūhāt*. III, 171 [Cairo, A.H. 1293]”. Another example of the triadicity found in the cosmos is that relating to people: “The Men of Allah are three. There is no fourth” (*Futūhāt* (III 34.28) (in Chittick 1989, 373)).

¹¹⁹ Ibn Arabi 1997, 282.

¹²⁰ In the *Futūhāt* (III 503.6), where Ibn Arabi deals with the oneness of God in relation to the many created things, he refers to God as the Father: “Consider the Prophet’s words, ‘Your Lord is one, as your father is one’” (Chittick 1998, 73).

¹²¹ Affifi 1964, 66 n.

¹²² On the issue of the Qur’anic *Rūh*, its restricted interpretations in Arab Islamic *tafsīr* (exegesis) and its *tasavvuf* differentiations, see, for example, Laffoon 2020 and 2023.

¹²³ “It is knowledge through the blowing (*nafth*) of the Holy Spirit (*rūh al-qudus*) into the heart (*rū’*), ...” (*Futūhāt* (I 31.11) (in Chittick 1989, 101)). Roman Christianity too regards the Holy Spirit as the source of all knowledge. While Ibn Arabi says that the Lord-Logos relationship is like the Speaker to the Speech (in

notion of the triadic God is explicitly present in Turkish Islam, e.g., in the Bektashi- Alevi's holy triad '*Allah-Muhammad-Ali*'. Even in the Turkish Sunni population, we find glimpses of the concept in everyday religious expressions such as '*Allah'ın Hakkı Üç'tür*' (the Reality of Allah is Three, or Allah has a right to Three) relating, for example, to the need to perform an everyday task three times for it to be blessedly perfected.

Multiplicity and Unity: The *Sinallilia* of Inviolable Manyness and Absolute Unity

In Roman *tasavvuf*, multiplicity (the singular(s)) and unity (the universal) *sinallilistically* inter-encapsulated with each other. Diversity is a precondition of unity, while unity is the *telos* of diversity: "Though Being is One Entity, the entities of the possible things have made it many, so It is the One/Many (*al-wāhid al-kathīr*)"¹²⁴. Or as Ibn Arabi's adopted son and disciple, Konevi states:

there is a peculiar unity in manyness as well as a relative manyness within unity that it is connected with and which makes it manifest. According to this conception, when unity and manyness are known through each other, the reason must be that they have penetrated each other; there must be a thing that unites them. This is an inescapable situation according to the character of the manifestations of the divine attributes¹²⁵.

This unifying 'thing' is uncreated divine love and knowledge of the creature and its cosmic actualisation, the Perfect Human Being.

Creation is rooted upon the entities of the possible things ('*ayn thābita* (the immutable entities)) in the presence of God which are nevertheless, from the point of created things, ever non-existent, i.e. uncreated 'thoughts-actions' of God in Himself. If you hear the closer counterpart of Ibn Arabi in terms of exegetical genre, Saint Maximus the Confessor, you get an image that clarifies the Akbarian position too:

Thus, the blessed Clement says that generally speaking, there are exemplars/paradigms even in the creatures, i.e., ideas that refer *to* something

other words the latter proceeds from the former), and that the All Merciful is the source of the All Merciful's Breath (the Holy Spirit), he never envisage any relationship in the Triad where the Muhammadan Logos is the direct source of the All Merciful's Breath (i.e., one similar to the Augustinian *Filioque*).

¹²⁴ *Futūhāt* (III 274.25, 276.9, 18) (in Chittick 1989, 214).

¹²⁵ Konevî 2002 (13th c.), 16.

instead of the lower genera that became patterns of the higher ones from that which are referred to, as the material fire is in relation to the ethereal fire. But the great Dionysius [the Aeropagitis] does not call these exemplars precisely, *ideas*. For even if the latter are called exemplars in Creation, they are not worthy of being worshipped, as Moses says... Nevertheless, Plato conceived these ideas and exemplars basely and [in a manner] unworthy of God; thus, this Father [Dionysius] indeed used that word but explained its meaning with piety. So, he called the divine wills delimiting and creative; the former because God gives hypostasis/being to everything that exists with merely His Will, and the latter because the beings come to be in different genera and differentiation. Note then that he called exemplars/[ideas] the *logoi* of the beings which provide them with their essences and preexist in God unitarily, i.e., the aims/destinations/targets¹²⁶.

These uncreated *logoi* are identical to Ibn Arabi's *tasavvufi* term '*ayn thābita* (immutable entity). And the pattern of the relation of the *logoi* to those defective Platonic ideas that Saint Maximus the Confessor uses is found precisely in Ibn Arabi's treatment of the '*ayn thābita* and the Mutazilites' understanding of them:

The Shaykh acknowledges his debt to the Mu'azilite theologians for the term '*ayn thābita*, though he also states that they did not reach a full and true understanding of its significance¹²⁷.

The unengendered engendering of the '*ayn thābita* in the cosmos are called, '*ayn mawjūda* (existent entity):

The difference between the two corresponds precisely to the difference between the possible thing before it is given existence and the same possible thing after it comes into existence. However, the attribute *thābita*, "immutable", helps remind us that the possible thing never leaves its state of possibility in the divine knowledge. Though the entity may "exist" in the cosmos, it is still immutably fixed and "nonexistent" [, i.e., uncreated] in God's knowledge¹²⁸.

In other words, the '*ayn mawjūda* are the living created images of the uncreated '*ayn thābita* (God's 'thoughts-actions' in Himself) in Creation. Commends Saint Maximus the Confessor on Saint Dionysius the Aeropagitis:

¹²⁶ Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 4:329CD.

¹²⁷ Chittick 1989, 83.

¹²⁸ Chittick 1989, 84.

“And some images”: we must understand here that the reference here is to the [divine] aims/destinations/targets[, i.e., the uncreated *logoi*], the images of which are the results/effects/creatures found in Creation... God becomes known in all creatures as the artisan is known to the artifact. Yet, as far as His Essence is concerned, God is utterly divided from everything/all. Because He is unknown to His creatures, He becomes known by way of that that unknowability [i.e., that He exists but not what He is in Himself (“He remains totally unknown as such”¹²⁹]; as He also becomes known [by way of His knowability, i.e.,] by overseeing/epistemological/scientific understanding and knowledge of His creatures¹³⁰.

Note here that in God, there is no distinction between ‘thought’ and ‘action’: “For what he has wanted he also has done”¹³¹.

As Konevi states:

The uncreated Unseen is what we usually refer to as “God.”... And God’s Knowledge is uncreated and immutable, just as He is uncreated and immutable. So He knows all things, all entities, from “eternity-without-beginning” (*al-azal*) to “eternity-without-end” (*al-abad*). Hence the objects of His Knowledge are called the “immutable entities” (*al-a’yān al-thābita*)¹³².

This is what corresponds to the living ‘immutable entities’ which are uncreated, belonging to the “*supra*-formal”:

These are the four basic levels of existence, referred to respectively as the “*supra*-formal” (*ma’nawī*, i.e., related to the “meanings” in God’s Knowledge, the term “meaning” - *ma’nā* - being synonymous with immutable entity), the “spiritual” (*rūḥānī*), the “imaginal” (*mithālī*), and the “sensory” (*ḥissī*). The first is uncreated, while the last three are created¹³³.

The result of the engendering of the uncreated immutable living *logoi* is the Cosmos and its created things or existent entities (‘*ayn mawjūda*): “The forms are diverse because of the diversity of relations, or the relations are diverse because of the diversity of the forms”¹³⁴. Thus, epistemologically, causality and participation are seen as mutually fulfilling, i.e., a participating causality. In the case of the human being, this produces the notion of unique

¹²⁹ Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 4:352D.

¹³⁰ Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 4:352BC.

¹³¹ Job/Iob 23:12 (in Pietersma 2007, 684, translated by Claude E. Cox).

¹³² Chittick 1982, 112.

¹³³ Chittick 1982, 113.

¹³⁴ *Futūḥāt* (IV 130.32) (in Chittick 1998, 39).

personal existence (essence and *hypostasis* together), which signifies a person as a unique singular and at the same time as part of a universal category (the human universal created in the image and likeness of God)) without violation of his/her individuality. As far as humanness is concerned, the *telos* of each person would lie in fulfilling his/her own human *logos* in his/her personal way, i.e., *the fulfilment of his/her fixed nature and his intentional principle, but inescapably within the limits of this human nature*. If the person succeeds in fulfilling God's plan, he/she overcomes 'delimitation' by becoming 'united' with God, which entails the fulfilment of all practical moral and rational concerns of philosophy. And this *telos*, i.e., *theosis*, is fixed: "The entity of the servant [the human being] is immutable. It never leaves its root and never emerges from its quarry"¹³⁵ – ever remain human yet potentially clothed in Uncreatedness (human nature beyond human nature yet in human nature) by God's Will via the uncreated divine operations.

The Perfect Human Being as Microcosm and Mediator: The Apex and Summation of Creation

One of the most central elements of Roman *tasavvuf* is the reality of the Perfect Human Being (*al-insān al-kāmil*, Tr *insan-ı kâmil*). Possessing both Uncreatedness (not by way of the divine Essence as such but only of uncreated energies) as an utterly incomparable Gift by God and only by God, and natural createdness.

As for the Perfect Man, he embraces all [the aforementioned] four levels of existence. Ordinary man, also, embraces all four levels, at least in the sense that they are clearly reflected within him. His "reality" or "meaning" his Divine level-is his immutable entity. His spirit corresponds to the World of the Spirits, his soul to the World of Image-Exemplars, and his body to the sensory world. Then as a unity he reflects the Perfect Man¹³⁶.

The Perfect human being is seen as a *barzah* (a mediator) between God and Creation. He/She is like "an isthmus between the world and God, bringing together and embracing both creatures and Him. ... man has brought together and embraced all that exists"¹³⁷. The Perfect human being is like a two-sided mirror, reflecting on one side, the Divine Perfection, and

¹³⁵ *Futūhāt* (II 3.28, 4.3, 26) (in Chittick 1989, 278).

¹³⁶ Chittick 1982, 112.

¹³⁷ Chittick 1979, 152-153.

on the other side, the cosmic one¹³⁸. In his/her cosmic-reflecting side, the human being is in himself a microcosm which fully encapsulates and summates the universe and its manyness. Similarly in Roman Christianity, “man is, first of all, presented ... [in St Maximus the Confessor] as being in all respects *in the middle* between the extremes of creation, to which he has a natural relationship. He was brought into being as an all- containing workshop, binding all together in himself”¹³⁹. Inversely, Ibn Arabi also sees the universe as a ‘huge human being’, the Greek philosophical *makranthropos*: “The cosmos is one of the people, since it is the human being great in size...”¹⁴⁰. And in his/her divine reflecting side, he/she represents divine perfection-based unity.

Ibn Arabi sees not only the human being but the whole creation as naturally reason-based and reason-governed: “Rational speech (*nutq* (*logos*)) pervades the whole cosmos. It is not a specific characteristic only of the human being”¹⁴¹. Affifi takes the presence of the particular *logoi* and their reason-based effects upon all created things one of the main differences between Ibn Arabi’s doctrine and Christianity, for which he says it accepts only the *Logos* in Christ¹⁴². Of course, Affifi’s claim does not hold true for Christianity but only for Western Augustinianisms (Catholicism, etc.) Thus, the distinguishing and unique characteristic of the human being is not his/her rational faculty but his/her creation in accordance with the Divine form/image and its concomitant *theosis*-related faculty, i.e., the heart, or as we have seen in Roman Christianity, the faculty of *Supraness*, Imagination. “The human being is defined specifically by the Divine Form. He who does not possess this definition is not a man. Rather he is an animal whose form resembles the outward appearance of man”¹⁴³. Thus, *contra* Western Christianity and modernity, the *telos* of the human being is not only the attainment of rationality, or the ‘mysticism’ contemplation of God via the Mind (in reality this is a demonic or human self-deception), but the attainment of true rationality via and *within* an all-encompassing *theosis*.

The *barzah* notion signifies the Koranic notion of union without violation, both uniting and delimitating what is united¹⁴⁴. That is why Ibn Arabi depicts the Name-Allah “as the ‘coincidence of opposites’, since it includes all the contrary names. ... [And] man, the ‘all-comprehensive

¹³⁸ *Futūhāt* (III 397.3) (in Chittick 1998, 249).

¹³⁹ Thunberg 1995, 139.

¹⁴⁰ *Futūhāt* (III 186.30) (in Chittick 1998, 289).

¹⁴¹ *Futūhāt* (III 154.18) (in Chittick 1989, 276).

¹⁴² Affifi 1964, 88.

¹⁴³ *Futūhāt* (III 154.18) (in Chittick 1989, 276).

¹⁴⁴ Koran (25:53) (in Bashier 2001).

presence' (*al-hadrat al-jāmi'a*), combines all the opposite qualities within himself¹⁴⁵. As we have seen, in Roman Christianity this type of unity-without-mixing of the Divine and human nature is termed *theosis* ('deification'). *The Divine and the Worldly are kept separate in their unification and united in their separation*. This is a formative principle for secularisation and for the typology of state–religion relations, since it designates a *sinallilistic*-type of interaction between the two.

While the Akbarian reality of the Perfect Human Being is a most defining and highest characteristic of *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf*, one that makes it the highest form of Islam as such, at the same time, in relation to the Lord Jesus Christ, it constitutes its point of internal 'failure' by its own standards; in fact, it is the doorway to the Lord Jesus Christ through criteria set by *vahdet-i vücud tasavvufi* Islam itself. If *insan-ı kâmil* is a reality, then, it follows, that the Theanthropic Lord Jesus Christ is necessarily and inescapably its fundamental *hypo-stasis*, its *archē*, middle and *telos*. God is Great in His Wills!!! But this belongs to another discussion.

The Road to Perfection: The Path from the Animal Man to the Perfect Human Being

Reflecting the inter-encapsulating triadic nature of Being, Roman *tasavvuf* envisages the human being as a hierarchical trichotomous unity of spirit, soul and body corresponding to the human faculties of heart (theophany, imagination), reason (both contemplative and instrumental) and praxis. In certain contexts, this corresponds to a dyadic conception of soul (heart-intellect and body, signifying the notions of meaning and the sensory¹⁴⁶). In true being, the 'spiritual- intelligible-bodily' inter-encapsulate perfectly: "In the spirit, the body has intelligible, known traces, because it bestows on the spirit knowledges of tasting and what cannot be known except through it; and in the body, the spirit has sensory traces that every living thing witnesses in itself"¹⁴⁷. In fact, "[t]he spirit cannot rationally understand (*'aql*) itself without the body, which is the locus of 'how many' and manyness"¹⁴⁸. And, in true being, "the body commands the soul only to the good"¹⁴⁹- this of course is totally anti-Gnostic/anti-Augustinian. The exoteric Law pertains to this level of the exoteric, the bodily, and power.

¹⁴⁵ Chittick 1989, 188.

¹⁴⁶ *Futūhāt* (I 733.5) (in Chittick 1998, 48).

¹⁴⁷ *Futūhāt* (III 315.9) (in Chittick 1998, 280).

¹⁴⁸ *Futūhāt* (II 618.15) (in Chittick 1989, 325).

¹⁴⁹ *Futūhāt* (III 171.2) (in Chittick 1998, 353).

Representing the intelligible, reason stands as a *barzah* between the exoteric sensible (praxis-law) and the esoteric spiritual (heart-unveiling). As such, it possesses a face towards the sensible and a face towards the spiritual. Its sensible face represents reason as it relates directly to praxis, which is the Aristotelian practical reason understood within an Islamic context. “God created the faculty named ‘reason’, placing it within the rational soul, to stand opposite natural passion when passion exercises control over the soul by diverting it from the occupation proper to it as specified by the Lawgiver”¹⁵⁰. Through its reflective power (*fikr*), reason looks at (*nazar*), considers and draws conclusions from the nature and causes of things. As in Roman Christianity, reason has an important yet only a posterior descriptive power vis-à-vis true divine knowledge (heart-based)¹⁵¹. Reason will only take the human being to the outer frontier of the created, but not further than this. As such, it can only affirm the principle of God’s dissimilarity (*tanzih*) to the created¹⁵².

The heart stands at the apex of human truth and unity as the locus of the manifestation of the Divine Reality in the human being: “The Real has chosen out for Himself from you only your heart”¹⁵³. The heart is the centre of unity: “the heart is His Throne and not delimited by any specific attribute. On the contrary, it brings together all the divine attributes, just as the All-merciful possesses all the Most Beautiful Names”¹⁵⁴. The non-delimitation of the heart as a reflector of the Divine stems from the uniqueness of each one of God’s never ending self-disclosures¹⁵⁵: “For the rational faculty delimits, like all other faculties *except the heart* ... The heart fluctuates with the fluctuation of self-disclosures, but the rational faculty is not like that”¹⁵⁶. The heart is the innermost part of the human being, which is witnessing and moved by the Mercy and Love of the Divine. The Akbarian notion of God’s non-delimitation is identical with the Roman Christian, one presenting him as ‘*ἄναρχος καὶ ἀτέλειτος*’, the un-delimited and endless God; in tandem, man experiences the union with God, as *ἄναρχος καὶ ἀτέλειτος* (without *archē*/beginning and without end/accomplishedly unaccomplished).

The characteristics of each level of knowledge and their corresponding human faculties are relative to the other three levels. For example, while reason is unitary vis-à-vis praxis, since it unites the sensory into the

¹⁵⁰ *Futūhāt* (II 319.13) (in Chittick 1989, 160).

¹⁵¹ Ibn Arabi 1997, 119.

¹⁵² *Futūhāt* (II 299.13) (in Chittick 1998, 95).

¹⁵³ *Futūhāt* (III 257.16) (in Chittick 1989, 245).

¹⁵⁴ *Futūhāt* (III 129.17) (in Chittick 1989, 107).

¹⁵⁵ *Futūhāt* (III 657.13) (in Chittick 1989, 111).

¹⁵⁶ *Futūhāt* (I 289.20) (in Chittick 1989, 111).

intelligible, it is divisive vis-à-vis the heart which unites the multiplicity-based intelligible and the bodily into true being. When compared to unveiling, both reason and practice are based on delimitation, constraint and divisiveness: “The legal authority and the reflective thinker [i.e., the philosopher] will never be upon ‘insight’ in their rulings [as the Folk of Allah, the friends of God are]. The legal authority may make a ruling today concerning a Shari‘ite case and tomorrow something may happen that will make clear to him that he was mistaken in yesterday’s ruling ... Were he upon insight, he would not rule mistakenly in his first consideration. The situation of the rational thinker is the same”¹⁵⁷. Reason and Law have their specific fields of application and modes of knowledge. If misapplied, both of them will deny unveiling. Unveiling, though, which provides the root of the universal proper order, will embrace everything and unite opposites.

The Law has a power (*quwwa*) whose reality will not allow it to be overstepped, just as reason also has such a power. With reason we deny what reason denies, since our present moment is reason [i.e., if we are dealing with things that pertain to reason], but we do not deny it by unveiling or the Law. With the Law we deny what the Law denies, since our present moment is the Law, but we do not deny it by unveiling or by reason. But *unveiling denies nothing. On the contrary, it establishes each thing in its proper level.* He whose present moment is unveiling will be denied, but he will deny no one. He whose present moment is reason will deny and be denied, and he whose present moment is the Law will deny and be denied. So know that!¹⁵⁸

In Roman *tasavvuf* “the Law is an outward (*zāhir*) dimension of the Reality (*haqīqa*), while the Reality is the inward (*bātin*) dimension of the Law”¹⁵⁹. “The ‘Reality’ is the actual situation of Being (*mā huwa ‘alayhi’l-wujūd*), with all that It entails of diversity, mutual similarity, and conflict. ... The Shari‘a is identical with the Reality ...”¹⁶⁰. So the Roman Islamic conception of the Law puts forward a living law whose meanings and ways of application change at every moment in parallel with the continuous and un-consumable change of the ‘divine root’ that the names-*logoi* (words) ‘transmit’ to the things in the cosmos as their latent realities. That is why Ibn Arabi is similarly at odds with the merely exoteric *ulema* (*‘ulamā’ al-rusūm*) as well as the merely rationalist theologians and philosophers to the degree that they both exclusively confine divine knowledge within the mode of their respective disciplines.

¹⁵⁷ *Futūhāt* (II 644.17) (in Chittick 1989, 237).

¹⁵⁸ *Futūhāt* (II 605.14) (in Chittick 1989, 243), emphasis ours.

¹⁵⁹ Chittick 1989, 260.

¹⁶⁰ *Futūhāt* (II 563.4,13) (in Chittick 1989, 260).

Faith and divine knowledge are perfected only when the heart is safe from rational and legal modes of knowledge and is dominant over them. “He who explains ‘heart’ as meaning ‘reason’ has no knowledge of the realities, for ‘reason’ is a delimitation (*taqyīd*), the word ‘*aql*’ (reason) being derived from ‘fetter’”¹⁶¹. It is important to note that what is objected to here is not reason as such but its competence at all vis-à-vis divine knowledge in itself. Saint Isaac the Syrian states:

Knowledge is delimited by [human] nature safeguarding it in all its ways. Faith makes its course *supra* nature. Knowledge does not admit unto itself anything which dissolves [human] nature, not even for the sake of trial, but it distances itself from those things... Knowledge is accompanied by fear; faith by trust... faith has the authority – in according to the likeness of God - even to create a new creation: You willed, and anything stood before You. And in many instances, it is possible to make everything out of nihil. Yet knowledge can do nothing without the pre-existing objects/materials of knowledge. Knowledge does not venture to step over that which does not belong to nature... And it is impossible to persuade knowledge to order an advance over these limits. Nevertheless, faith authoritatively passes through these... All these are *supra* [human] nature and contrary to the ways of knowledge...¹⁶².

Divine knowledge exhausts reason but reason does not exhaust divine knowledge. In other words, there is a *sinallilistic* inter-encapsulation relation, a differentiating union in which, on the one hand, each faculty retains its own individual modes and fields (indeed, opposing), yet on the other hand, they exist in a hierarchical ranking in the sense that the ultimate goal of the human being is *theosis* not mere intellectual perfection. Taken together with the harmonious *sinallilistic* conception of the singular-universal relations, this has enormous consequences for secularisation since the two secularisation fields (the emancipation of the human singular and the movement from contemplative to instrumental reason) do not affect the public nature of the divine universal (religion) - since it falls outside the competence of reason as such- like they do in the case of Western modernity (privatisation).

The human being as a created thing, who lives in the cosmos, needs both divine and worldly knowledge. The Perfect Human being

¹⁶¹ *Futūhāt* (III 198.33) (in Chittick 1989, 107).

¹⁶² Saint Isaac the Syrian 1991b., 12-15; Homilies 62-65 (Greek text) corresponding to Homily 51 (Syriac text).

has two visions (*nazar*) of the Real, which is why He appointed him with two eyes. With one eye he looks upon Him in respect to the fact that He is independent of the worlds [- this eye pertains to *tanzîh* and reason]. So he sees Him neither in anything nor in himself. Through the other eye he looks upon Him in respect of His name All-merciful, which seeks the cosmos and is sought by the cosmos. He sees His Being permeating all things [- this eye pertains to *tashbîh* and unveiling]¹⁶³.

In Roman Christianity:

As the bodily eyes relate to those objects of the senses, faith is related to our secret eyes. We possess two psychic eyes for noeric things, as the Fathers say, just as we possess two bodily eyes - yet they do not have the same use as far as vision is concerned. With one, we see the secret things of the glory of God which are veiled in the natures of things [, i.e., the created *logoi* of the creatures], that is, His power and His wisdom and His co-eternal providence for us, which covers us in the greatness of His governance. Similarly, in this same eye, we see the heavenly hosts, who are our fellow servants. With the other eye, we see the glory of His Holy Nature - that is when God satisfactorily approves our entrance to the spiritual mysteries and opens our mind to the ocean of faith¹⁶⁴.

It is the *sinallilia* of these two eyes, combined in a united yet differentiated vision, that lies at the centre of Roman *tasavvuf*.

Theosis: The Telos of the Human Being

Know that the worshiper worships Him only inasmuch As He is God, not in respect of His Essence – contrary to the words of Rābi‘at al-‘Adawiyya¹⁶⁵.

The different levels of lived-out knowledge – the *supra*-formless-form of which ontologically reconstitute man - assume their meaning within and as constitutive parts of the path to *theosis*. Through these levels, the human being moves from potential to actual Perfection (Completion in Uncreatedness (not created completion), Fulfilment) and fulfils the divine *oikonomia* and *taxis*.

Perfection is what is sought, not completion, for completion lies in creation, but perfection lies in that which the complete acquires and the benefits it bestows. ... ‘God gives to each thing its creation,’ and thereby its

¹⁶³ *Futūhāt* (III 151.10) (in Chittick 1989, 368).

¹⁶⁴ Saint Isaac the Syrian 1991b., 96-97 (Homily 72 (43)).

¹⁶⁵ *Futūhāt* (I 454.22), in Chittick 1998, 375.

completion, ‘then He guides’ to the acquisition of perfection. He who is guided reaches perfection, but he who stops with his completion has been deprived”¹⁶⁶.

Theosis denotes an unconfused union with and actualised knowledge of the Muhammadan *Logos*/Name-*logoi*/names and energies (*himam/hadrat al-af’al*) as divine attributes. The names-*logoi* and energies are conduits that reveal the divine intentions and qualities to the human being, leading him to the Perfection of Uncreatedness, the Perfection of non-Existence (not in the *nihil* but in the *Supra*-God). “When the friends of God climb in the ascents of their inspirations (*ma’ār’ij al-hikam*) the goal of their arrival is the divine names, since the divine names seek them”¹⁶⁷. The command of the true Incarnate God-*Logos*, the Second Person/Face of the Holy Trinity, the Lord Jesus Christ is clear; you ought to seek Perfection in God:

Be you therefore perfect as your heavenly Father is Perfect.¹⁶⁸

For He seeks His Perfection in you:

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne¹⁶⁹.

As far as they pertain to the Muhammadan *Logos* vis-à-vis the created, the names-*logoi* denote primarily logical (‘rational’) relations. Yet as far as they pertain to the highest part of the Muhammadan *Logos*, which represents knowledge exclusively pertaining to divine things, they reveal God’s loving divine attributes and qualities in Uncreation. That is why Ibn Arabi, when he speaks about *tawhīd* (unity of God), the validity of which is proven by reason, says “[*tawhīd* is not something ontological (*amr wujūdī*). It is merely a relationship, and relationships cannot be seen through unveiling. They can only be known by way of proofs. For unveiling is a vision. Vision only becomes connected to its object [who is God] through qualities (*kayfiyya*) which the object possesses”¹⁷⁰. Thus, as Saint Maximus the Confessor witnesses, “by the *logos* of faith ... all that is *supra* nature and

¹⁶⁶ *Futūhāt* (III 405.3) (in Chittick 1989, 297).

¹⁶⁷ *Futūhāt* (III 55.29) (in Chittick 1989, 257).

¹⁶⁸ Matthew 5:48.

¹⁶⁹ The Apocalypse/Unveiling 3:20-21.

¹⁷⁰ *Futūhāt* (II 291.30) (in Chittick 1989, 233-234).

supra knowledge is grasped”¹⁷¹. As Saint Maximus the Confessor further attests:

Faith is knowledge without proof[, i.e., the knowledge that lies outside the realm of proof as such]. If thus, faith is knowledge without proof, then faith is a *supra*-nature[(s)] relation; through [faith] we unite with God in a *supra*-noesis union [(a marriage that is *supra* the humanly natural operation of the *nous*)] in an unknown manner – which is yet not provable¹⁷².

The knowability, i.e., *partake-ability* of the uncreated divine *logoi* is in fact a crucial dividing line that separates Arabic and Roman Ottoman/Turkish *tasavvuf*. On this point Ibn Arabi “is different from Ghazzali, who emphasises the unknowability of the Divine names”¹⁷³.

The ontological lived-out assumption of the names does not relate to some isolated and other-worldly spiritual or intellectual experience. While “the Platonic dichotomy between the world of sense perception and the realm of Forms is Christianised by St. Augustine into a dichotomy between the world of the natural desires and the realm of divine order”¹⁷⁴, in Roman Orthodox Christianity, Saint Gregory Palamas “considers the effort to disassociate the intellect from the body to attain ‘intelligible visions’ as it takes place in ... Gnostic and Neoplatonic systems, as demonic and nonsensical, since ‘the body is not evil’”¹⁷⁵. In Romanity, i.e., in Christianity as well as in Islam, the intelligible ideas (Platonic) are neither the Essence nor the ‘thoughts’ of God.

Moreover, the names-*logoi* as the divine attributes need to be actualised, engendered in praxis. Without their actualisation the names have no real meaning. Actualisation in praxis means that what the imaginal visions, insights and symbolic meanings that the names carry within them as divine knowledge need to be ‘incarnated’ as practical human virtues. There must always exist a reciprocal relationship of the names giving meaning to action and of actions giving form to the names: actualised knowledge and knowledgeable action. “In our view, knowledge requires practice, and necessarily so, or else it is not knowledge, even if it appears in the form of knowledge”¹⁷⁶. This inescapable differentiated union of soul (spirit and mind) and body generates a correspondence between the hierarchy of

¹⁷¹ Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 91:113D.

¹⁷² Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 90:376B.

¹⁷³ Takeshita 1987, 171.

¹⁷⁴ MacIntyre 1998, 117.

¹⁷⁵ Rev. Nikolaos Loudovikos 2006, 171.

¹⁷⁶ *Futūhāt* (III 333.17) (in Chittick 1989, 151).

excellence in the names-*logoi* and the human virtues. The actualisation in praxis of the names is indeed the essence of Roman *tasavvuf*:

assuming the character traits of God – that is Sufism¹⁷⁷.

Its *telos* is *theosis*:

the gnostic¹⁷⁸ assumes the character traits of God, to the point where it seems as if he is He. He is not He, yet he is He¹⁷⁹.

The unity of the Divine and Human violate neither of their own distinct natures. On the part of God, it takes place as an expression of His love for mankind and the cosmos, and on the part of the human being, it fulfils the human mode of being. This unity is energetic as a mode of being based on trope (manner, way, mode), not on ontological mixing. Unity with God means a divine mode of human existence by ‘mimicking’ through actualising uncreated imaginal vision. This is the only type of unification between God and the human being that is permissible within the limits of the *tanzih* principle. Reflecting the *tashbih* principle, unveiling entails a mutual movement of God towards the human being and the human being towards God that leads to perfection. It needs to be noticed that, for Ibn Arabi, there are two kinds of science, ‘bestowed’ (*mawhūb*) and ‘earned’ (*muktasab*). Unveiling belongs to the former, and rational and legal science to the latter. Ibn Arabi says that bestowed science “is referred to in God’s words, ‘They would have eaten what was above them’ [Koran] (5:66)”¹⁸⁰ – Roman Christianity terms this type of knowledge ‘wisdom from above’ (*ἄνωθεν σοφία*)¹⁸¹, or “knowledge from within” (*ἑσωθεν γνῶσις*). For earned science, he says that “God alludes to it in His words, ‘what was beneath their feet,’ alluding to their hard work (*kadd*) and their effort (*ijtihād*)”¹⁸² – Roman Christianity uses the term ‘wisdom from below’ (*κάτωθεν σοφία*), or “knowledge from without” (*θύραθεν γνῶσις*) for this kind of knowledge. Unveiling is neither formed from sensory input, nor needs the pronounced word (speech-*kelam*-reason) to be understood – both pertain to knowledge from below. Knowledge from above, i.e., theology per se, involves a mutual

¹⁷⁷ *Futūhāt* (II 267.11) (in Chittick 1989, 283).

¹⁷⁸ Meaning, a knower who had lived-out being with God - nothing to do with Gnosticism whatsoever.

¹⁷⁹ *Futūhāt* (II 316.9) (in Chittick 1989, 149).

¹⁸⁰ *Futūhāt* (II 594.28) (in Chittick 1989, 200).

¹⁸¹ Metallinos 1998b., 178.

¹⁸² *Futūhāt* (II 594.28) (in Chittick 1989, 200).

and reciprocal movement of God and the human being exclusively through the divine attributes. Like being itself, the overall scheme of knowledge in Roman *tasavvuf* is triadically monistic. As the worthy Derviş Fecrî (to the world, Şevki Koca) of the *Bektaşîyye*:

İlme'l yakîn: Knowing through knowledge/science (*ilim*),
Hakke'l yakîn: Knowing through 'becoming' God¹⁸³.

In a certain sense and without any violation and mixing of divine and human natures, God becomes 'the human being' to the degree that the human being actualises in praxis the divine attributes, and the human being becomes 'God' to the degree God unveils His attributes to him. Ibn Arabi uses the term 'mutual waystation' (*munâzala*) to describe this 'becoming' that pertains to neither ontological (Platonic/Gnostic/Augustinian-like) nor logical union but to mode of being. "The difference between a waystation and a mutual waystation is as follows:

A 'waystation' is a station in which God descends (*nuzûl*) to you, or within which you alight (*nuzûl*) upon Him. Notice the difference between *nuzûl* 'to' (*ilâ*) and *nuzûl* 'upon' (*alâ*). A 'mutual waystation' is that He desires to descend to you and places within your heart a seeking to alight upon Him. Your Resolve (*himma*) undergoes a spiritual movement in order to alight upon Him and you come together (*ijtimâ*) with Him between these two *nuzûls*: your alighting upon Him, before you reach the waystation, and His descent to you – that is, the attentiveness (*tawajjuh*) of a divine name – before He reaches the waystation. The occurrence of this coming together outside the two waystations is called a 'mutual waystation'¹⁸⁴.

The moving power for bridging the permanently unbridgeable chasm between the uncreated God and creation is uncreate divine love. As Ibn Arabi says, without revelation God and his unending love would not have been known, since the *şeriat* (i.e., the living Koran) would not have been known. Mankind would have remained a prisoner of the faculty of reason and philosophy, which cannot accept the love that revelation brings, and reason would have been the exclusive and sole master in affairs of knowledge both divine and worldly¹⁸⁵. It is clear that, at least at the time, Ibn Arabi was unaware of what Roman Orthodox Christian represented.

¹⁸³ Koca 1999, 43, quoting Bilginer, M. S. *Mısri Niyazi Divanı Şerhi* [*The Commentary on The Collected Poetry of Mısri Niyazî*]. İstanbul: 1976, 140.

¹⁸⁴ *Futûhât* (II 577.32) (in Chittick 1989, 279).

¹⁸⁵ *Futûhât* (II 326.12) (in Chittick 1989, 180).

Theosis has enormous consequences on three inter-encapsulating levels. First, it has a cosmological dimension, since it is the Perfect human being, as microcosm, that sustains and gives meaning to the whole of the created universe. Related to this, the deification of the human being pertains to the specific person but through his/her common human nature provides sustenance to the humanity as a whole. In other words, there is an inescapable inter-encapsulation between the individual and the social in *Theosis*. The Perfect human being is necessarily perfect both in relation to God and in relation to society. Both perfections are synonymous and inseparable. Indeed, they are two faces of a single Perfection. On the path of unity with God, the human being is at the same time on the path of unity with his fellow human being. In a true Aristotelian fashion, Ibn Arabi states that “man is a social being. He needs to be with other men to communicate, to understand, to cooperate, to befriend, to love”¹⁸⁶. The important characteristic of the *telos* of the Perfect human being is, as in the *autexousiotis*-based Roman Christianity but not in the piety-aiming Augustinian Catholic and Protestant ‘non-delimitation’, i.e., possession of self-authority. The human being actualises the perfect order towards God, himself/herself and his/her fellow human beings, precisely because he/she becomes perfect. The Roman Islamic human being possesses not only reason sufficient for its object of enquiry, but also authority sufficient for its objects of application. In other words, the human being, if he/she succeeds in attaining his/her own perfection, succeeds in ‘establishing’ the perfect social order by way of the differentiated unity of the ‘physical’ and the ‘metaphysical’ as the divine *oikonomia*. If, on the other hand, he/she fails in the former goal, he/she also fails in the latter one, which means nothing less than the actualization of ‘tyranny’ in human relations.

Humanity is the proof of God’s existence and a guide to lead the creation to Him [, i.e., the divine *oikonomia*]. He sent man into the universe as His deputy in order to make the created know the Creator. .. He gave him all that and more, not to support tyranny but so mankind might rule in justice, and made him responsible for all that might happen in the whole of creation¹⁸⁷.

That is why the notion of justice is so central in Roman Ottoman/Turkish *tasavvuf*.

The aim of the *şeriat* is the establishment of justice. The living law “is the scale established within the cosmos to establish justice (‘*adl*’)”¹⁸⁸. Justice

¹⁸⁶ Ibn Arabi 1997, 96.

¹⁸⁷ Ibn Arabi 1997, 40.

¹⁸⁸ *Futūhāt* (II 463.16) (in Chittick 1989, 173).

means giving each person or thing its due (Ar. *haq*, Tr. *hak*). The translation into English of Arabic '*adl*' and Turkish *adalet* as 'justice' is inadequate and stems from necessity. Both '*adl*' and *adalet* are synonymous with the Greek *δικαιοσύνη*, which "has a flavour all of its own and combines the notion of fairness in externals with that of personal integrity in a way that no English word does"¹⁸⁹. The order of justice that stipulates each created thing's due is established through and governed by the divine names-*logoi*. In other words, the human being's fully obeying the law is synonymous with his enacting and actualising all the divine names in his character as virtues in praxis, something which presupposes his knowledge of them.

The only obstacle that stands between the human being and his perfection is not selfhood but egoistic caprice (*hawā*). Caprice means ignorance-based self-centredness, self-opinionatedness and egoistical self-love. This is the source of all evil:

the law has no applicability with regard to human nature but it concerns the self-authority (*autexousiotis*) of the volition/disposition (*προαίρεσις*) to be able to [freely] orient itself towards either good or evil¹⁹⁰.

It is important to note that, like Roman Christianity, Roman *tasavvuf* does not attribute a real existence to evil¹⁹¹.

Evil is the opposite of good, and nothing emerges from good but good; evil is only the nonexistence of good. Hence, all good is existence and all evil is nonexistence, since it is the manifestation of that which has no entity in reality. 'Ignorance' (*jahl*) consists of the lack of knowledge, nothing else. Hence it is not an ontological quality (*amr wujūdī*). Nonexistence is evil, and in itself nonexistence is ugly, wherever it might be supposed. That is why the sound report has reached us that the Prophet said in supplicating his Lord, 'The good, all of it, is in Thy hands, while evil does not go back to Thee.' Hence he did not ascribe evil to Him. Were evil an ontological quality, its coming into existence would go back to God, since there is no agent but God. Hence all existence is good, since it is identical with the Sheer Good (*al-khayr al-mahd*), who is God¹⁹².

¹⁸⁹ MacIntyre 2000, 11.

¹⁹⁰ Saint Symeon Metaphrastis (10th century AD) (in Saint Kallistos Aggelikoudis [(14th century AD)] and Saint Symeon Metaphrastis 1997, 380-1).

¹⁹¹ This conception contrasts with the Manichaean – and ultimately, Augustinian – understanding where reality is a mixture of being (good) and non-being (evil), deep traces of which are found in Western Frankish Christianity.

¹⁹² *Futūhāt* (III 528.6) (in Chittick 1989, 290).

In persons who have not reached non-delimitation and perfection, base traits, understood as deficiencies, must be fought against. In other words, non-existence is perceivable for the imperfect human being as something against which he/she must fight. This fight against one's own limitations and imperfections constitutes the concept of 'struggle' (*jihād, mujāhada*)¹⁹³. Says Ibn Arabi:

You must carry out the greater jihad, which is the jihad against your passions... for if you accomplish this jihad against your lower self, your other jihad - the jihad against enemies- will be sincere¹⁹⁴.

This esoteric jihad stands to evil as cure stands to illness. That is why Ibn Arabi says that "the shaykhs are the physicians of God's religion"¹⁹⁵ – similarly, Father John Romanides, who talks about the 'sickness of religion', calls Roman Christianity a unique anthropological and therapeutic phenomenon¹⁹⁶.

Roman Islam and Aspects of Modernity

It is important to note a number of issues that, as we will see later, relate to Turkish modernisation. The first is that the path to Perfection is open to both men and women alike. "Among the friends of God are those known as the 'noble' (*al-kuramā*), both men and women. God has befriended them through nobility of soul"¹⁹⁷. Following the Akbarian type of union, in which the united retain their individual characteristics, Ibn Arabi dismisses the widespread view of his time that the degree of difference between man and woman equals the 'fact' that Eve was produced from Adam, and so Adam is the secondary cause – the first cause being God – of Eve¹⁹⁸. The way Ibn Arabi argues against the notion of woman being merely dependent on man is in effect identical with that used by the Cappadocian Father Saint Gregory the Theologian¹⁹⁹.

¹⁹³ Chittick 1989, 211. This notion of the pre-eminence of an esoteric holy war is also found in Roman Christianity (see, Metallinos 2001, 20, and Dounetas 2010b., 167-188).

¹⁹⁴ Quoted in Neale 2022, 2.

¹⁹⁵ *Futūhāt* (II 364.28) (in Chittick 1989, 272).

¹⁹⁶ Father John Romanides 2004, 30.

¹⁹⁷ *Futūhāt* (II 38.33) (in Chittick 1989, 320).

¹⁹⁸ *Futūhāt* (II 471.19) (in Chittick 1998, 139).

¹⁹⁹ Saint Gregory the Theologian, *Λόγος* (Logos, Oration) 38, in Kalogeropoulou-Metallinou 1992, 21.

The second issue relevant to modernization is that laziness is considered as one of the vilest character traits, especially when it is justified under religious pretences. “Do not listen to the talk of the idle ‘Sufi,’ who sits and does nothing and says, ‘My Lord is sufficient for me,’ for he has suffered all the things about which I have warned you. Do not be idle, for the best and the most lawful sustenance that comes from God is that which you have gained with your own hands”²⁰⁰. Yet it must be clear here that while hard working is praised and necessary for the development of character traits, it does not assume salvific centrality like in Protestantism.

Thirdly, worship that involves mere exoteric formalities (*namaz*, ablutions, etc) without the participation of the heart is but empty physical movements (*şekilcilik*).

Fourthly, within *vahdet-i vücut tasavvuf* there is an acceptance of all religions of the Book. Since Muhammad represents all the Messenger/Law-givers and bringers of religions, the *sunna* is defined according to the universal message of all prophets: “[t]here is no single practice found in each and every prophecy, only the performance of religion, coming together in it, and the statement of *tawhîd* [Unity of God]. ... Bukhārî has written a chapter entitled, ‘The chapter on what has come concerning the fact that he religion of the prophets is one’, and this one religion is nothing but *tawhîd*, performing the religion, and worship. On this the prophets have all come together”²⁰¹. Although it seems that this acceptance - initially at least - involves a hierarchical understanding, this, in my view, is ultimately ‘indissolubly dissolved’ by way of its central characteristic, i.e., love. In Yunus Emre’s words: “I tried to make sense of the Four Books [Torah, Psalms, Gospel, Koran], until love arrived, and it all became a syllable”²⁰². Or, as Ibn Arabi states: “there was a time when I took it amiss in my companion if his religion was not near to mine; But now my heart takes on every form: it is a pasture for gazelles, a monastery for monks; A temple of idols and a Ka’ba for pilgrims, the tables of Torah and the holy book of the Qur’an. Love is my religion, and whichever way its riding beasts turn, that way lies my religion and belief”²⁰³. And Rumi concludes: “notice in your heart the Prophet’s knowledge, without book, without teacher, without instructor”²⁰⁴. Interestingly, Romanides writes about Roman Christianity: “in the experience of *theosis* the Old and New Testaments are nullified. Theology is nullified. The theologian himself/herself is nullified. For the

²⁰⁰ Ibn Arabi 1997, 293.

²⁰¹ *Futūhāt* (II 414.13) (in Chittick 1989, 171).

²⁰² Yunus Emre 1989, 21.

²⁰³ Goldziher 1981, 152.

²⁰⁴ Goldziher 1981, 153.

theologian is deified. And he/she has experienced the *reality* which is called God, who transcends logic and everything because there is no similarity between God and the cosmos”²⁰⁵.

After the sign of the Cross, Grace operates in such a way, so that it gives peace to the members [of the body] and the heart, and the soul appears [to the senses] as a guileless child, and the one [in this Perfection] ceases from judging other people, being them Greeks [(idolaters)], Jews, sinners, or worldly men. For the inner human being sees everyone with a clean eye; he is glad for the whole world, he wants to prostrate in front of and love everyone, Greeks and Jews too²⁰⁶.

As far as secularisation is concerned, the centrality of the Perfect human being and love in Roman *tasavvuf* generates by inclusion – not elimination – the ideal of humanity as such in the place of the idea of a merely Islamic umma (Tr. *ümmet*). Moreover, from Ibn Arabi’s conception of religion and exoteric practice, we understand that, as long as the more the esoteric (*batini*) is fulfilled, the more the shape and form of the exoteric (*zahiri*) (religious practices, modes of worship, the form of government, etc) becomes irrelevant. It goes without saying that any exoteric entity and arrangement which is seen as harmful to religion (the esoteric) is to be delimited or, if that fails, eliminated. This is most important, for example, for understanding the Gökalgian and Kemalist position and behaviour on the issues of, primarily, the Caliphate and, secondary, the *tarikats* (religious orders). Moreover, the acceptance of the diversity of religious practice reflects the multiplicity that the bodily represents. As reflections of the manyness of the exoteric-outward, practices are expected to be based on manyness, which nevertheless needs the esoteric-inward as its principle of unity in order to be completed. This Akbarian conception of the *sunna* is important for understanding the diversity of the *tarikats* in the Ottoman realm. On the question of the *tarikats*, it is important to note here that Ibn Arabi himself did not set up a specific *tarik*, i.e., an institutionally organised form of *tasavvuf*. This is something that will become of interest in understanding and explaining the closing down of the *tarikats* by the Kemalist Republic in 1925.

²⁰⁵ Father John Romanides (in Metropolitan Hierotheos (Vlachos) 2010, 316).

²⁰⁶ Saint Macarius of Egypt, PG 34:532C.

The Perfect Cosmic Order: The Reflection of the *Supra* Realm

As we have seen, the concept of the Perfect human being as the reflection of the Muhammadan *Logos* – which strangely is as if representing the non-yet Incarnate God-*Logos* of the Old Testament - is so central to Roman *tasavvuf* that it inter-relates issues of cosmology, epistemology, and soteriology. The top of the hierarchy of perfect human beings is occupied by the *Kutb* (Pole, Axis). Eraydın describes the concept of *kutb*:

The *Kutb* resembles the axis of a millstone. As the millstone turns around the axle, the universe (*âlem*) turns around it. Every work, every nation, every place has its *kutb*. The real *kutb* is the *Kutbu'l-Aktâb* (the *kutb* of *kutbs*) ... This person is the inheritor of the Muhammadan Reality (*Hakikat-ı Muhammediyye*)²⁰⁷.

“The *Kutb* resembles the axis of a millstone. As the millstone turns around the axle, the universe (*âlem*) turns around it. Every work, every nation, every place has its *kutb*. The real *kutb* is the *Kutbu'l-Aktâb* (the *kutb* of *kutbs*) ... This person is the inheritor of the Muhammadan Reality (*Hakikat-ı Muhammediyye*)”²⁰⁸. The *Kutb* as the most perfect of the perfect human beings (the true cosmic Caliph²⁰⁹) brings the whole universe into order in a manner that reflects the perfection of the divine order. In general, the present and apparent holders of power are seen as only substitutes for the *kutb*, who holds authority by delegation ultimately from the *Hakikat-ı Muhammediyye*, the *Muhammadian Reality*²¹⁰.

Together with the *Kutb* category of Perfect Men, we find that of ‘the People of Blame’ (*Melamiyye*). According to Roman *tasavvuf*, the Perfect Men are divided into two sections: those who are known and those who are hidden. The hidden ones are referred to as the *Melamiyye*. “The People of Blame are those who know and are not known”²¹¹. These are God’s chosen of the chosen and hidden under the protection of the angelic realm²¹². “They are the sages, those who put things in their proper places. ... They violate nothing of what God has arranged in His creation, leaving it just as He has arranged it. Whatever is required for this world, they leave for this world,

²⁰⁷ Eraydın 2001, 121.

²⁰⁸ Eraydın 2001, 121.

²⁰⁹ See Chittick 1998, 203-205.

²¹⁰ Chodkiewicz 1993b., 194.

²¹¹ *Futūhāt* (II 145.1, II 16.15) (in Chittick 1989, 372-373).

²¹² Ibn Arabi 1997, 79.

and whatever is required for the next world, they leave for the next world. They look at things with the same eye with which God looks at things. They never confuse realities”²¹³. In other words, they represent incarnated reflections of the perfect cosmic Order of the Universe. Only God knows their true identity and character, which is hidden from the eyes of the world in the sense that their outward behaviour attracts the blame and ridicule of the common people. In reality, “*were their rank with God to become manifest to the people, the people would take them as gods*. But since they have habitually been veiled from the common people, the blame which is ascribed to the common people when something worthy of it appears from them is also ascribed to them. It is as if their rank itself blames them because it is not manifest”²¹⁴. Ibn Arabi “emphasizes time and time again that the Envoy [i.e., the Prophet himself] did not let the spiritual graces that God abundantly showered on him show. We know that for Ibn Arabî, this concealment of the attributes of sainthood constituted the sign of his spiritual perfection and the principal characteristic of his heirs, the *malâmatiyya*, whom he also often calls the “*Muhammadians*”. This is concealment, not disguise: the *’ârîf* (the sage) does not need to disguise his spiritual states; he transcends them, hence his sobriety [within his/her divine ‘drunkenness’]”²¹⁵. In other words, for Roman Islam, the *Melamis* represent the highest form of true Islam.

It is of interest that as far as Christianity is concerned, it is only Roman Christianity that possesses a type of ‘sainthood’ totally commensurable with that of the *Melamiyye*, i.e., the *salos* (‘the fool/mad in Christ’). Aiming to serve his fellow human beings, the *salos* excoriates the deficiencies of the people through acts of self-humiliation and foolishness (in which he/she conceals his or her true sainthood) without regard to self-centred honour, attracting the blame of others for seeming immorality²¹⁶.

The notions of *Kutb* and *Melamiyye* inter-encapsulate with the notion of the ‘order of the universe’. In Roman *tasavvuf* there can be no utter division in the perfect order of being between what is ‘round-about God’ (the Heavenly Realm) and what is ‘meta-this’ (the Cosmos). In Roman Christianity, as Saint and Patriarch, Photius the Great attests:

²¹³ *Futūhāt* (II 16.15) (in Chittick 1989, 373).

²¹⁴ *Futūhāt* (III 34.28) (in Chittick 1989, 375), emphasis added.

²¹⁵ Addas 2002.

²¹⁶ For a typical Roman Christian *salos*, Saint Andrew the Fool in Christ (9th – 10th century AD), see, for example, Martinis (1988). As Martini’s shows, while the Catholic Church recognises the sainthood of the majority of the Orthodox *salos*, a commensurable type of sainthood was never developed and systematically ‘cultivated’ in the West (Martinis 1988, 159-60).

it is clear for all to see that the heavenly and the earthly are in conjunction and continuity with each other. The noeric [(intelligible)] and noetic [(being-in-uncreatedness)] are not set apart from the corporeal and the senses, but they clearly mutually touch one another through the perpetual divine providence. And not only this but also the *logos*-based animal, i.e., the human being, comprises both visible and invisible parts²¹⁷.

As Chittick aptly states, “the cosmos is nothing but a replication of the [pre-existing] original”²¹⁸ based on the uncreated divine *logoi*/operations. The perfect order of the cosmos is but a reflection of the angelic realm, with the Perfect human being having the pivotal role in actualising it. “The reason for the revelation of the Divine Law is to eliminate disorder and to establish harmony ... it is known the Lord wanted to delegate the government of the human kingdom to a single entity... When ruling is deputized to someone, as is the case with everything else, it has an outer and an inner meaning. ... The inner spiritual, government infiltrating into the human realm – as if through narrow veins and thin nerves, invisibly and secretly – is quite different from the evident, visible outer order”²¹⁹.

In Roman *tasavvuf*, the divine name ‘life’ (*hayât*) rules over all others – even over knowledge yet in a manner which does not deny the absolute “compass of knowledge”²²⁰. In this understanding, the Koran is seen as a living text, the meaning of which needs to be discovered both exoterically and esoterically via the perfect human being²²¹. The overall religious theophilosophical ethic which is generated and portrayed here is essentially a life-following one – totally commensurable with that found in Roman Christianity - as opposed to a merely literalist and rule-based ethic (moralism). The Ottoman *Nizam-ı Âlem* conception stipulates the need for a harmonious synergy between the Ottoman *ümera*, responsible for the ‘worldly’ space, and the *ulema*, responsible for the religious space pertaining to sciences, in order to bring about *the Ordering of the Universe* within an overall religious environment. In the Ottoman context, both the Sultans and the state administrators, as well as the *ulema*, were educated in, and propagated, the concept of *Nizam-ı Âlem*. As it is clear from our discussion above, for a polity which is theo-philosophically based on Roman *vahdet-i vücut tasavvuf*

²¹⁷ Saint Photius the Great, PG 102:181BC.

²¹⁸ Chittick 1998, 168.

²¹⁹ Ibn Arabi 1997, 51-2.

²²⁰ Chittick 1980, 398.

²²¹ Similarly, in Roman Christianity, “with the coming of Christ [the archetype of the perfect human being], the scriptural Torah, that is the Mosaic Law was replaced [by fulfilment not elimination] by the ‘unbuilt Torah’, i.e., the incarnated Divine *Logos*” (Dounetas 2010b., 21).

- like for one based on Roman Christianity - the concept of *Nizam-ı Âlem* cannot have a merely instrumental-reason-derived political-secular meaning and significance as modern 'ideologies' prescribe.

In his discussion on the possible origins of the concept, Görgün points out that it is difficult to pinpoint with great accuracy when the term was used for the first time by the Ottomans. Interestingly, the earliest case Görgün examines dates to the time of Fatih Sultan Mehmed, which coincides with the zenith of 'Byzantine' and former Roman Christian *devşirme* influence. Moreover, Görgün argues that the concept must have been a *development* of the concept of Ibn Khaldun's *umrân* by the Ottoman *ulema*²²². Yet, as Morris clearly shows, despite some seemingly 'Sufi' elements in his prophetic epistemology, Ibn Khaldun takes a "critical approach to both the intellectual and the manifold wider popular influences and expressions (especially the wider sociopolitical ramifications) that are associated with what modern writers often conveniently term Sufism—a vast complex of far-reaching creative currents in Islamic cultures and religious life in Ibn Khaldun's time that were often closely associated with, or at least symbolized by, the distinctive terminology and teachings of Ibn 'Arabi and his later popular interpreters"²²³, an approach which sharply contrasts the Ottoman politico-social reality. And, as 'the need' for doctrinal development which Görgün puts forward shows, there was indeed a fundamental difference between Ibn Haldun's *umrân* and the Ottoman *Nizam-ı Âlem*, there is total compatibility between the latter and its Byzantine counterpart, *Táξις* (*Taxis*, 'Order') or *Tαξιαρχία* (*Taxiarhia*, 'Hegemony of the Order'). Kemal Oktay points out the correspondence between the two key constitutive concepts of Ottoman religio-political 'ideology' and their 'Byzantine' counterparts, namely *Nizâm-ı Âlem/Taxis* and *Adalet-İstimâlet/Oikonomia*.

Like Byzantine political ideology, the Ottoman political ideology too was based on two fundamental concepts. These are the *Nizam-ı Âlem* ['Order of

²²² Görgün 2000, 182. An important problem relating to the possible relation to Ibn Haldun is that, as İlhan Kutluer shows, in the understanding of Ottoman intellectuals Ibn Haldun is antithetically juxtaposed to the primarily 'Aristotelian' School of Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina, which saw prophethood (revelation) as a prerequisite of and complementary to civilised life and sciences. The Ottoman intellectuals favoured the latter understanding (Kutluer 2000). Indeed, the issue of the relation between revelation and sciences (intellect) had been at the centre of relevant disputes in the late Byzantine era. The 'Aristotelian' Roman Orthodox Christian theologians (Saint Gregory Palamas, Saint and Patriarch Gennadios Scholarios, Georgios Trapezountios) favoured a position similar to the Ottoman one.

²²³ Morris 2009, 242-243.

the Universe'] and *Adalet* [Justice]. *Nizam-ı Âlem* is the functional equivalent of the Byzantine concept of *Taxis*²²⁴.

Later on in our discussion will see how the notions of *Kutb*, *Melamiyye* and *Nizam-ı Âlem* relate to the person of Atatürk and the Kemalist Republic (1923 – 1938). As we shall see, *laiklik* can be seen as a modern version of *Nizam-ı Âlem* within a worldly framework.

Conclusions

As our theoretical discussion above has shown, the pre-existing religiosities in, on the one hand, the Frankish Christian West and, on the other, Christiano-Islamic Romanity set two different theophilosophical terrains upon which secularisation and its concomitant forms of 'secularism', or better, 'worldlisation' were established, evolved and shaped.

In the Frankish case, the overwhelming power of Augustinian thought created an overall Manichaean-derived dualist religio-moral order based on the conception of, on the one hand, (the religious universal, contemplative upper reason, sainthood-related upper will), and on the conflictual other, (the worldly human singular, instrumental lower reason, survival/power-related lower will). In the Roman case, both Islamic and Christian, the overall theophilosophical order constituted a dualist yet differentiatedly unified monistic whole in which exists a hierarchical *sinallilistic* inter-encapsulation between the religious universal (relating but not exhausted within reason (both contemplative and instrumental), and essentially centred upon the heart-uncreated divine love) and the worldly human singular (essentially centred yet not exhausted with the heart-love, and relating strongly to reason (both contemplative and instrumental))²²⁵. It is

²²⁴ Oktay 2001, 32. Oktay's article cited here had been first published under the title, "De la *Taxis* et de l'*Oikonomia* au Cercle de Justice : de l'idéologie politique byzantine à l'idéologie politique ottomane", in *Méditerranées*, N°20.

²²⁵ The apparent comingling between love and reason in Roman Christianity is vividly present in the notion of *διάκρισις* (*diakrisis*, 'discernment', 'differentiation') (Apostle Paul, Philippians (1:9)), which as "the apex of all virtues since it constitutes the binding material among them. ... *diakrisis* binds together the house of the soul, but also the construct of the human society" [Christodoulos (Archimandrite) 2003, 111]. Because "*diakrisis* and love constitute an inseparable syzygy" (Archimandrite Christodoulos 2003, 122), *diakrisis* secures loving unity without the loss of individuality. The lack of *diakrisis* leads love astray: "First, it is ignorance of the specificity of each case, of the specific conditions, and of the real needs of each

of interest that, while in the Roman schema, the notion of the Frankish- type of the will is absent, in the Frankish schema it is the centrality of the heart-love that is missing (or erroneously is exhausted with the category of ‘emotions’).

In this framework, it comes as no surprise that the two secularisation fields (the emancipation of the human singular and the instrumentalisation of reason) bring two distinctively different forms of modern worldly-dominated moral orders in the two milieus. In the Frankish case, via the rise of free-will and the instrumentalisation of reason and its goods (goods of effectiveness²²⁶), secularism entails the disestablishment and privatisation of the religious. In the Roman case, within the precept of ‘unity in diversity, diversity in unity’, the ‘worldlisation’ basically inverts the overall religious framework into a worldly one, yet keeping the religious both separated from (private) and united to (public) the worldly. Here the word is about a living organic ‘unity in diversity, diversity in unity’ and not about one based primarily on power. Having examined the Roman Christian state *sinallilia*, here is a glimpse of its Roman Islamic Ottoman counterpart; writes, as if prognostically, Ayfer Karakaya-Stump in her book, *The Kizilbash/Alevis in Ottoman Anatolia Sufism, Politics and Community*:

Unlike church-state relations in the European context (and to a large extent in Safavid Persia despite the more hierarchical organisation of the Shi‘i ulema), conditioned by the presence of two distinct and often rival institutional structures, the higher echelons of the religious classes in the Ottoman Empire were in large measure structurally integrated and subordinate to the state apparatus since especially the reign of Mehmed II (r. 1451–1481), which saw the initial creation of the Ottoman imperial ethos and centralised bureaucracy. In that sense, the sixteenth century did not mark a real departure from the past. What was remarkable in the Ottoman context was not the close collaboration of the religious and political elites per se, but rather the particularly intense and penetrating form that this collaboration took, and the vigour and systematic nature with which the state came to supervise religion. This process entailed a concerted effort on the part of

human being and our own self. ... [Secondly,] it is ignorance of the motive and of the purpose of our action” (Archimandrite Christodoulos 2003, 116). It is in this framework that “the inclusion of all human beings without differentiation in generic and impersonal rules is an inhuman stance” (Archimandrite Christodoulos 2003, 122). Or in Ibn Arabi’s terms: “Behaviour is not a form. It is not to act in the same way towards everyone. You have to consider each case, each person, in accordance with the circumstance and the need of the person” (Ibn Arabi 1997b., 208). In the Koran, *diakrisis* is referred to, for example, by the term, *al-furqān* (the discernment, the criterion) (e.g., Koran 8:26).

²²⁶ On the privatisation of good in the modern West, see MacIntyre (1990 a.).

secular and religious authorities to (re)define the boundaries of proper Sunnism and impose it on the subject populations, which accords with the confessionalisation model. It manifested itself perhaps most vibrantly in the endorsement and authorisation of a set of legal rulings (Ot. fetvā) by the famous şeyhü'l-islām Ebussu'ud as dynastic law (kânün) by Sultan Süleyman, the Lawgiver (Kânünî). *This was a practice not seen before.*²²⁷.

It is also clear from our discussion that our proposed two secularisation fields as a reflection of the three secularisation dimensions of the Western 'secularisation thesis' on the philosophical canvas of First Principles constitute an important analytical tool for an improved theoretical understanding of secularisation and secularism.

If, by way of its theophilosophical commensurability to Roman Christianity, *vahdet-i vücut tasavvuf* Islam represents Islamic Romanity, were the Ottomans and the Rumelian-Anatolian Turks in general religiously Roman? In other words, was this type of Islam their predominant religiosity?

²²⁷ Karakaya-Stump 2020, 259, emphasis added.

CHAPTER 2

‘THE WATER TAKES THE COLOUR OF THE CUP’: ROMAN ISLAMIC ‘METADOXY’ FROM ITS ORIGINS TO THE END OF THE 15TH CENTURY

Osman Gazi honoured the unbelievers of *Bilecik* very much.
They asked him: ‘Why do you honour the unbelievers of *Bilecik*?’.
He said: ‘They are our neighbours. We came as strangers into this land.
They treated us well. Now it is our duty to honour them’.
—The Chronicles of Yahsi-Fakih (?-1414 AD)¹

No one doubts that you are the rightful Emperor of the Romans. Because,
indeed, the Emperor is he who lawfully possesses the centre of the empire.
And the centre of the Roman Empire is Constantinople:
Thus the Emperor is whoever lawfully possesses the city.
And it is not from men but by God’s command that you possess,
by your sword, the above-mentioned throne. Thus you are the lawful
Emperor of the Romans.
And he who is Emperor of the Romans is Emperor of the whole world.
—Georgios Trapezountios (1395-1484 AD) to Fatih Sultan Mehmed²

So, the Inheritance which an exhausted Constantinople left intact to its
new masters (and which itself had inherited
from ancient Rome) was Ecumenicity, irrespective, anymore,
of the person of the Emperor,
of his ethnicity or of his religion.
—Eleni Arveler [-Glykatzi]³

¹ Zachariadou 1999, 141.

² Kitsikis 2007, 93.

³ Arveler [-Glykatzi] 2009, 253

A pre-eminent scholar of the 'Byzantine'-Ottoman interaction, Michel Balivet, identifies the deficiencies of the perception of discontinuity between the two empires: "this vision of discontinuity, which, strictly speaking, conceives history in purely political terms, becomes particularly inadequate and distortive when dealing with the history of Anatolian mentalities and cultures, because it privileges the occurrence of fractures and breakages to the detriment of important and deep phenomena, which themselves are perpetuated without break in continuity"⁴. Within identical regions, sometimes within the same village, we encounter types of inter-confessional relations which are very similar in periods as far apart from each other as the Seljuk period and the end of the Ottoman Empire"⁵. And, "to not take into account the mechanisms of cultural exchange and religious interpenetration in the study of Byzantine-Turkish and then Ottoman Anatolia is to leave in the shadow a cog essential to understanding not only the progressive passage of Byzantine Asia Minor into Ottoman Anatolia, but also the continued existence of a popular Anatolian heritage, common to all groups in this region, until the early contemporary period"⁶. Modern Enlightenment academic compartmentalisation has had enormous consequences for our understanding of the two empires, not only vis-à-vis continuities and discontinuities, but vis-à-vis the empires themselves.

For the purpose of our discussion, we will concentrate on the nature of the Islamic part of what we can call the Roman 'Byzantine'-Ottoman Continuum or Christian-Islamic Romanity. It must not be forgotten that in Ottoman parlance, Anatolia was called *Diyar-ı Rum* ('the country of the Romans'), while the Balkans were termed *Rumeli* ('the land of the Romans'). We have already discussed the notion of Roman, Rum, etc diachronically. As we have seen, as Zachariadou points out, gradually after the battle of Manzikert in 1071,

the term 'Rum' began to mean not only the Byzantine lands and their inhabitants but also the Muslims who had settled there. In other words, the Seljuk rulers of Rum were called Seljuks of Rum, and their Sultan, the Sultan of Rum, and the Turks who lived in the former Byzantine Asia Minor, Rumi.

⁴ Balivet 1999 21. The article cited here is titled (in French) "*Dervishes, Papades [i.e., Orthodox priests] and Villagers: A note on the Perenniality of the Islamo-Christian Contact in Central Anatolia*".

⁵ Balivet 1999, 22.

⁶ Balivet 1999, 29. Interestingly, we witness this cultural-religious exchange and fusion even in the Greek urban folk songs known as *rembetika* (late 19th century - early-mid 20th century) among which we find a pervasive presence of dervishes in cordial relations with the 'worldly' *rembetes*.

Later on, when the state of the Ottoman Turks was established, their Sultan carried, up to the end of the 14th century, the title ‘Sultan of the Rum’...⁷.

In his pioneering and well-documented article, *Christian Elements in the Identity of the Anatolian Turkmens (12th-13th centuries)*, Rustam Shukurov writes:

Rūm did not simply mean Anatolia or a part of it, but ‘Ρωμανία, Byzantium in general. Turks styled themselves Romans/Rūmī since they conquered the land of ‘Ρωμανία (*bilād al- Rūm, diyār-i Rūm*) and became residents of it, together with Christian Greeks and Armenians. However, if the Constantinopolitan Byzantines regarded the Anatolian Turkic territories as lands temporarily lost from their indivisible universal Romania, the Turkmen rulers considered ‘Ρωμανία as being factually divided between several rulers all of whom were the “Kings of Romania”⁸.

The Roman Islamic-Christian Seljuks of Ikonion

The reign of the early 13th-century Anatolian Seljuk sultans coincides with the development and propagation of *vahdet-i vücut tasavvuf* in Roman Christian lands. It was “the period of transition in Sūfī [*tasavvuf*] doctrine from implicit to explicit, and the start, sociologically speaking, of its transition from informality to formality, from fluidity to organisation. Its fundamental concepts were defined and organised, via the work of Ibn ‘Arabī, into a comprehensive synthesis; and from then on, viewed as a summit or as a target, acknowledged or unacknowledged, for followers and adversaries alike, this work constituted an essential landmark and a fruitful source of technical terminology. At the same time “the *turuq* [plural of *tarika*, ‘path’, ‘brotherhood’] came into being and began codifying the practices they had inherited into rules and methods”⁹. Indeed, as Chodkiewicz says, this correlation was not accidental¹⁰. Ibn Arabi came to Anatolia ‘by way of’ his friendship with Şeyh Majduddin (Tr. Mecdeddin) Ishad b. Yusuf al-Rumi (the Roman, of Malatya) who “became responsible for the training of the sons of the Seljuk sultan, in particular Sultan Kaykhusraw I ...”¹¹. Giyase ‘d-Din Key Hüsrev I was the son of the Seljuk Sultan Kılıç Arslan

⁷ Zachariadou 1999, 61.

⁸ Shukurov 2004, 721-722.

⁹ Chodkiewicz 1993, 10. For a detailed examination of the religio-social role of the dervishes in the period between the 13th and 15th-centuries, see Ay (2008).

¹⁰ Chodkiewicz 1993, 10.

¹¹ Hirtenstein 1999, 174.

II (r. 1156 – 1192 AD) and of an Orthodox Christian woman in his harem¹². During the dynastic strife after 1192 AD, Giyase ‘d-Din Key Hüsrev I

was obliged to take refuge with the Byzantine Emperor in Constantinople, where he was adopted by the latter and was baptized [as a Roman Christian]. Nevertheless, a few years later he returned to his country. Although apostasy from Islam is a sin punished by death, he was accepted by his milieu and his subjects and ascended to the throne¹³.

Like his father, he took an Orthodox Christian wife¹⁴.

Ibn Arabi and Mecdeddin arrived in Konya on Key Hüsrev I’s invitation around 1205. Ibn Arabi became involved in the education of Key Hüsrev’s son, the future Sultan ‘İzze d-Din Key Kavus I (r. 1211 – 1220 AD), with whom enjoyed a close relationship that lasted for some thirteen years. From their correspondence it is clear that their relation was not like one between a ruler and his subject; it rather resembled that of a father and son¹⁵. Although the compilation of “a preliminary version of the *Futūhāt*, his *summa mystica*, [had] begun in Mecca [around 1203¹⁶]”, the work was seriously revised and completed only after his settlement in Damascus in 1223, i.e., after almost 20 years in and out of Anatolia. At the popular level, “*Akbarian teaching progressed homogenously, impregnating all levels of [Anatolian] society in a more or less rapid manner*”¹⁷. It is of interest to point out – something almost totally missing in Western studies - the strong presence of Roman Christianity not only in Anatolia but in the religious traditions of Ibn Arabi’s birthplace, Moorish Andalusian Spain and north-western Africa, through the presence of “Roman Orthodox Melkites [the Imperials], i.e., those who belonged to the religion of the Roman Emperor in New Rome, Constantinople”¹⁸. These Melkites whose existence and role Western historiography strives to minimise, if not annihilate in favour of anti-Chalcedonian Monophysites (Nestorians, Jacobites) had a presence all over the Islamic lands from North Africa and Islamic Spain to the borders of China via the Turkic Central Asia lands. Indeed, the marriage of Alexander the Great with the Bactrian/Sogdian Princess, Roxane, i.e., the union of ancient Greek and proto-Turk was not a phenomenon that should surprise us at all as it continued from the later Greek Bactrian/Sogdian states

¹² Savvides 1996, 51.

¹³ Zachariadou 1995, 124.

¹⁴ Hasluck 1929, 370.

¹⁵ Addas 1993, 234.

¹⁶ Chodkiewicz 1993, 7.

¹⁷ Benaïssa 1999, 101.

¹⁸ Father John Romanides 1977.

to the Roman Christian Empire ('Byzantium') and the 'Melkite' or Orthodox Christians in Central Asia in the late antique and medieval periods and the Turks of the 6th century AD (see, e.g., Theophylactus Simocates in the early 7th century AD¹⁹).

The founder of the *Mevleviyye*, Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi (1203–1272 AD), came to Konya (Ikonion), the capital of the Roman Seljuks, during the reign of Sultan 'Ala-ed-din Key Kubad I (1220–1237 AD), which undoubtedly represented the golden era of the Sultanate of Rum. "Ala-ed-din was a highly educated man and an enlightened ruler"²⁰. The emergence and development of Rumi as a *tasavvuf* master and poet can be traced to the influence of Şems-i Tebrizi (d. 1247 AD), 'Rumi's Sun'²¹, who is said to secretly baptised a Christian²². While Rumi was familiar with some Greek, his son, Sultan Veled, was fluent in it and composed poetry in Greek²³. Even more crucially, Rumi "attributed a higher status to the 'Holy Prophet Jesus' than that of a simple prophet in line with his contemporary Sunni Muslims"²⁴. The same holds true for Ibn Arabi too, who minimises the difference between the Christian and the Islamic conception of Christ²⁵. As for Rumi, "he appears, further, to have regarded himself specially as a missionary to the Greeks, and is reported by Eflaki to have said that 'God had a great regard for the Roman people' [Rumi], and, in answer to a prayer of Abu Bekr, the first Caliph, made them 'a chief *receptacle* of his mercy'"²⁶. Rumi was revered by Jews, Christians and Muslims alike.

According to Hasluck, "[t]o Ala-ed-din politically, as to the Mevlevis philosophically, the assimilation of Christian and Moslem was desirable. ... It seems, therefore, possible that some sort of religious compromise on a philosophical basis was devised by Ala-ed-din, Jelal-ed-din [Rumi] and the local Christian clergy, and deliberately fostered by some or all of these parties"²⁷. Indeed, as we will see further, this was the theophilosophy of the Roman *vahdet-i vücud* in its Islamic (Sunni or 'heterodox') or Orthodox

¹⁹ On the issue of the Melkites, see, for example, the courageous works of Ken Parry, Sergei P. Brun, Krzysztof Kościelniak and the pioneering Ying Lin.

²⁰ Hasluck 1929, 370.

²¹ Shams of Tabriz 2008.

²² Balivet 2000, 20.

²³ Gordlevski 1988, 327.

²⁴ Mirmiroğlu 1940, 292.

²⁵ See for example, Shah-Kazemi 2001.

²⁶ Hasluck 1929, 371.

²⁷ Hasluck 1929, 377.

Christian form²⁸. Smith (1944) observes that Rumi, who died some thirty years after Ibn Arabi, belonged to the same school of thought as him, and Tahralı notes that “[T]he [Ottoman] commentators on the *Mathnawı* [of Rumi] would later explain its verses with teachings and terms taken from the works of Ibn ‘Arabı and al-Qūnawı [Tr Konevi]”²⁹. Indeed, throughout the history of the Seljuks and the Ottomans, the official *ulema* and the commentators almost always intertwined and understood the two masters together and in relation to one another: “The commentaries on [Ibn Arabi’s] *Fusūs* and [Mevlana’s] *Mesnevı* played the most important part in the idea of the *vahdet-i vücüd* becoming known and gaining prevalence”³⁰. In other words, Ibn Arabi’s theophosophy and Rumi’s poetry are expressions of the same type of religiosity: it is “the idea of the *vahdet-i vücüd* that Ibn Arabi and Mevlana took to the point of perfection”³¹.

The general focus of Rumi was the Seljuk palace and Konya. Although Rumi introduced into Anatolian Islamic religiosity music, poetry and the *sema* (ritual dance)³², unlike Yunus İmre/Emre (c. 1240 – 1329 AD) and Hacı Bektaş Veli (c. 1209 – 1270 or 1242 – 1337 AD), who wrote in Turkish, his communication medium was Persian. Due to this, he was not so influential among the Anatolian Türkmen or newly converted rural populations. But his son, Sultan Veled, began composing his own works in Turkish, and it was this that enabled Mevlevism to spread among the people.³³ Sultan Veled is remembered with love and respect among the Bektashis and Alevis³⁴. Due to the circumstances of the time, the *Mevleviyye* was split into two branches or ‘faces’, of which the *Veled* branch (*Veled kolu*) was fully ascribed to Sunnism and the *şeriat*, and the *Şems* branch (*Şems kolu*) was related to Bektashism/Alevism – the latter, as we will see, played a crucial role in Ottoman modernisation and in the formation of the Kemalist *laik* Republic.

After the death of Sultan Giyaseddin (1245 AD), a war over the Seljuk Sultanate broke out in which İzzeddin Keykâvus II (r. 1246 -1261 AD) managed to retain the Seljuk lands west of the river Alyos and his brother, Kılıç Arslan IV (r. 1249 – 1265 AD) the Eastern ones. While Kılıç was

²⁸ Balivet presents four typical and characteristic examples spanning from the 13th to the 19th century in which Orthodox monks and dervishes convert one another by appealing to commensurable religious standards and methods (Balivet 1999).

²⁹ Tahralı 1999, 45.

³⁰ Kara 1999, 320.

³¹ Kara 1999, 343.

³² *Sema* was originally an Alevi element [Zelyut 1995, 86].

³³ Noyan (Dedebaba), 68.

³⁴ Noyan (Dedebaba), 213.

merely an instrument of the Mongols, İzzeddin was close to both Roman Christians and the Türkmen. “The court of İzzeddin Keykâvus, the Seljuk sultan of Rum, who was enthroned in 1246 and whose mother was a Greek, was administered by his maternal uncles, Kyr Kedid and Kyr Hayi, who were also Greeks. Their devotion to Orthodox Christianity was such that it caused a split between Muslims and Christians at the court”³⁵. “İzzeddin, son of a Christian mother, as the Bishop of Pisidia attests, had indeed been Christian, and his sons, whenever they visited Constantinople, visited Christian churches of that city, participating in the holy liturgies and being admitted to the Sacrament”³⁶.

Early Roman Christian-Islamic Demographic and Religious Inter- encapsulation

The place of *vahdet-i vücüd tasavvuf* in Anatolian Islam is summed up by Sunar as follows: “Although *vahdet-i vücüd* is the goal of *all the Islamic tarikats*, it is only two of them that represent this view in its most pure form: Melamism and Bektashism. Because of this, Ibn Arabi’s theory of the Perfect Human Being plays the dominating role in these two *tarikats*”³⁷. The main difference between the two *tarikats* lies in their external organisation and mode of attaining perfection. “The Melami and Bektashi *tarikats* contain the same [divine] reality. For [the purpose of enhancing] divine tasting, the Bektashis approach this reality actually and in the body too [i.e., by certain rituals], and they have formulated certain methods for this. But, as I said, the essence of both *tarikats* is the same, i.e., the trinity *İlmelyakîn* [Knowing through knowledge/science (*ilim*)] *Aynelyakîn* [Knowing through vision/observation], *Hakkelyakîn* [Knowing through ‘becoming’]”³⁸.

There is also a direct commensurability with Roman Christianity: “the theology of Bektashism is based on the ‘Unity of Being’ (*Vücudun Birliği*)” foundation. In matters of belief and ceremonies, common points are found, on the one hand with Islam, and on the other, with [Roman] Christianity that [the Bektashis] consider as a ‘relative’ (*akraba*) to themselves”³⁹. The key point vis-à-vis theological argument here is that mainstream Western scholars such as Mélikoff argue for a Bektashi connection to Bogomilism,

³⁵ Kitsikis 1996, 107/1996b., 73. The title ‘Kyr’ is derived from the Roman Greek ‘*Kyrios*’ meaning Lord, Master.

³⁶ Mirmiroğlu 1940, 291. See also Hasluck 1929, 370-1.

³⁷ Sunar 1975, 8, emphasis ours.

³⁸ Sunar 1975, 8.

³⁹ Hasluck 1914-5, 40.

Catharism and Manicheanism,⁴⁰ which in fact represented neo-platonising dualism. A similar claim is put forward about the Christians who participated in the *Babai* revolt along with the Muslims⁴¹, and in general for those Christians who sided with the ‘Turks’. Yet the centrality of the dualistic monism of Roman Christianity and Rumelian-Anatolian *vahdet-i viicud tasavvuf* in general renders such a connection essentially invalid.

In general, Western scholarship relates that the possible Christian influences on Inner Asia Turkish ‘Sufism’ and subsequently Bektashism-Alevism to Nestorians and Syro-Chaldeans *via* Sassanid Persia. Yet as the invaluable research of Lin shows, the Monks *Fulin* (Roman Orthodox) who had reached even China *via* Inner Asia during the Tang period (7th – early 10th centuries AD) could not have been only ones adhering to the Nestorian creed (considered as heretical by Roman Christianity) but more likely there existed also Melkites, i.e., Roman Orthodox Christian Syrians faithful to the Chalcedonian Creed⁴².

Bektashism was a way by which a Rumelian or Anatolian Christian could remain Christian and become Muslim at the same time. A good Bektashi-Alevi does not differentiate between a Muslim and a Christian (*Her iyi insan Bektaşidir*⁴³). Moreover, contrary to Alevism, Bektashism is not hereditary and can be adopted. Throughout Ottoman history, “there existed Mevlevis and Bektashis that were also Christians”⁴⁴ - a trend that would continue at least until the early 20th century⁴⁵.

Holbrook describes the *Melamiyye* as a splinter group of the *Bayramiyye* which emerged as an Ottoman/Turkish *tarikât* in the early 15th century after Tamerlane’s invasion. A kind of *supra*-order, it was primarily composed of *şeyhs* previously initiated in other *tarikats*⁴⁶. Its fundamental practices derive from Ibn Arabi’s teachings and particularly on those related to concealed human perfection and sainthood – in Roman Christian terms, the *salos* (‘the fool/mad in Christ’).

Ocak, among others, draws attention to the centrality of the saint figure in Turkish Islam: “Whether Sunni or heterodox, Turkish popular Islam

⁴⁰ Melikoff 2000.

⁴¹ Ocak 1996, 116-7.

⁴² Lin 2009.

⁴³ “Every good man is a Bektashi” (Noyan (Dedebaba) 1998, 74).

⁴⁴ Mirkelâmoğlu 2000, 446.

⁴⁵ Mirmiroğlu, 1940, 119, quoting Monseigneur Petit. Mirmiroğlu talks about the many cases of Mevlevi Orthodox Christians whom he personally knew as late 1940, such as Diamantis Ketseoglou (Yaman Dede) (Mirmiroğlu 1940, 392). After his conversion to Islam in 1942, he assumed the name, Mehmet Kadir Keçeoğlu.

⁴⁶ Holbrook 1992, 15-6; see also the important article by F. Betül Yavuz 2019.

(*Türk halk İslâmı*) developed around a powerful cult of saints. This cult is common to both of these traditions....”⁴⁷. Within Rumelian-Anatolian religiosity, this hagio-centrism expresses the *vahdet-i vücud* notion of the Perfect Human Being. One of the most revered Roman *tasavvufi* personalities for both Sunni and Bektashi-Alevi Turkish Islam, the 13th-century Anatolian poet Yunus İmre/Emre wrote: “Don’t say ‘I’ve read, I’ve learned’, Don’t say ‘I’ve worshipped a lot’. If you do not accept the Perfect Man, all other works are futile”⁴⁸. It is in that sense that Eyüboğlu, while comparing the numerous early Ottoman Sunni *tarikats* and the later *Mevleviyye*, *Bayramiyye*, *Nakşibendiyye*, *Kadiriyye*, *Halvetiyye*, etc., states that “between these institutions, which are named after their founder [i.e., the saint], and their branches there is not the smallest difference from the point of view of essence, regulation and belief”⁴⁹. As we will see, Eyüboğlu’s statement is valid for all Ottoman *tarikats* except the post-mid-18th-century *Nakşibendiyye*, which developed into a *tarikat* atypical of those in Roman Islamic milieu.

The development of the Bektashis vitally relates to the *Rum Abdalları/Abdalan-ı Rum*, i.e., the 14th–early-15th-century dervish groups developed around Thrace and the Eastern Aegean region which came out of the highly syncretistic *Babai* movement (13th-14th century AD)⁵⁰. Ocak classifies the *Abdâlân-ı Rum* as relating to four general groups of dervish fathers (*halifeler*) led by Baba İlyas, Muhlis Paşa, Hacı Bektaş Veli, and Sarı Saltuk and Barak Baba with their respective disciples⁵¹ - the latter two as one group. “Köprülü and Gölpınarlı call[ed] the ‘Alawîs ‘country Bektāshîs’ because the ‘Alawîs describe themselves as ‘a rough form of the same phenomenon’”⁵². Hülya Küçük argues that the “[d]ifferences between the Bektāshîs’ and the ‘Alawîs originate mainly from some social factors, and, sometimes, can be reduced to being regarded as ‘sophisticated’ versus ‘unsophisticated’. Hence, in spite of all the[ir exoteric] ... differences, there is little actual difference in their beliefs”⁵³.

⁴⁷ Ocak 1996, 81.

⁴⁸ Yunus Emre 1989, 51.

⁴⁹ Eyüboğlu 1989, 159.

⁵⁰ For a comprehensive treatment of Bektashism-*Alevilik* in Turkish, see the works of Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, Eyüboğlu (2000) and the 7-volume work of Bedri Noyan (Dedebaba) (1998-2006) – the latter being a participant’s account. The most relevant work in Western scholarship is that of Birge (1937). See also the works of Irène Mélikoff.

⁵¹ Ocak 1996, 201.

⁵² Hülya Küçük 2002, 31.

⁵³ Hülya Küçük 2002, 31.

“Elvan Çelebi, the grandson of the famous Baba İlyas (d. 1241) who led a religiopolitical rebellion of Turkomans against the Anatolian Seljuqs, counts Hacı Bektaş among the prominent legates (halife) of the latter. Indeed, Hacı Bektaş is one of the few Sufi leaders whom Elvan Çelebi mentions by name in his long book dedicated to the story of Baba İlyas’ uprising and its legacy”⁵⁴. The *Babailer İsyanı* (*Dervish Fathers’ Rebellion*), led by Baba İlyas Horasani in Amasya and his disciple Baba İshak in Adıyaman, took place during the reign of Gıyase ‘d-Din Key Hüsrev II (1237 -1245 AD), who adopted a policy of proximity towards the Mongols and in certain aspects towards the Western (Frankish) powers. Referring to Baba İshak, the contemporary Malatya-born Monophysite bishop, Gregorius Ebü’l Ferec (BarHebraeus) (d. 1286 AD) states that in October/November of 1240/1, “a bad separatist movement broke out against the Arab religion. [It was because] an old and ascetic Turkmen gained fame in Amasya. His name was Papa”⁵⁵, i.e., Baba (İshak). It is interesting to note that in Greek Παπά(ς) (Papa(s)) means priest. In his book, *Amasya Tarihi* [*The History of Amasya*], the Sunni conservative anti-Batıni writer Hüseyin Hüsameddin (Yasar) states in line with the 13th-century historian Ibn Bibi that Baba İshak was originally a Roman Christian (‘Hellene’)⁵⁶. His original name was Isaak, and he was related to the Imperial house of Pontic Commene of Trabzon.

There is a specific, usually nationalistic and/or Islamist, trend in the study of the various Roman Islamic *tarikats* that ascribes to them an Inner Asian connection. This is especially evident in the identification of apparent Turkish shamanistic elements found among the *Bektaşîyye* and the Alevîs. It is primarily Turkish, and to a lesser extent Western, modern historiography that utilises the Inner Asian connection in order to provide a ‘purely Turkish’ source of Anatolian Turkish religiosity based on shamanism⁵⁷ and

⁵⁴ Curry 2021, 218.

⁵⁵ Birdoğan 1995, 48, quoting from Gregorius Ebü’l Ferec (Abu’l-Farac, BarHebraeus, İbnu’l-İbri) Abul-Farac Tarihi Cilt II [*The History of Abul-Farac Vol. II*], translated by Ö.R. Doğrul. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, [(translator)], 1950, 539. In our opinion, BarHebraeus rightly identifies the anti-Arab religious nature of the ‘Turkmen’ revolt. Yet, his Syrian origins and monophysite beliefs can explain his unwarranted equation of Islam with the Arab understanding of it.

⁵⁶ Birdoğan 1995, 52.

⁵⁷ It is most interesting to note that the general religious tradition of (Turkic) Inner Asia (shamanism, etc.) was heavily anthropocentric, and communalist as well as individualist (DeWeese 1994, 36).

Inner Asian ‘Sufism’⁵⁸ – a characteristic which Bektashis-Alevis consistently deny while passionately defending their Turkishness⁵⁹. In reality, the doctrinal predominance of *vahdet-i vücud* in the Islamisation of Anatolia and Rumelia was so overwhelming that both the shamanistic elements and the essentially practice-based type of Inner Asian Sufism⁶⁰ were incorporated into the all-inclusive *vahdet-i vücud*. That is why the *Yesevîyye* “could not get a hold in Anatolia and melted into the other *tarikats*”⁶¹. And the same holds true for the Inner Asian *Nakşibendiyye*, which did not find a significant niche in Anatolia and Rumelia until the 15th century, when the Anatolian-born *Şeyh* Molla İlâhî had doctrinally adapted it to *vahdet-i vücud*⁶². Eyüboğlu is right when he argues that “Bektashism is a product of Anatolia, a small chapter of its history. ... Its relation to Asia is not one of essence; it is only one of appearances”⁶³.

The *Bektaşîyye* played a key religious role in the main Ottoman infantry corps, the *Yeniçeris*. At least up to the end of the 15th century, the *Yeniçeris* were composed exclusively of former Roman Christians⁶⁴ who had been initiated into the *Bektaşîyye*. In light of our current discussion, we can point out the religio-political centrality of Bektashism to the Ottoman state. As a projection of the *barzah* as the double-sided unifying intermediary which is a pivotally constitutive concept of the *vahdet-i vücüd*, Bektashism/Alevism can be conceptualised as a single *barzah*, the one side of which reflects Sunnism and the other Orthodox Christianity. As Kitsikis states, during the circumcision celebrations of Mehmed III in 1582, the Orthodox Christian

⁵⁸ For example, in his introduction to Hasluck’s *Bektaşîlik Tedkikleri*, Fuat Köprülü explains that the study of Bektashism is essentially a study of the Turks because the Turks brought Sufism to Anatolia (Livni 2002, 10-11).

⁵⁹ Bektashi-Alevis and their writers do not dismiss certain individual Central Asian ‘shamanistic’ elements in their tradition. What they vehemently deny is the alleged shamanistic nature of Bektashism-Alevism as such. Contrary to claims made by Köprülü-following Turkish and Western researchers, they reject any strong relations with Iranian Shiism, which they consider as fanatical. On the other hand, they consider their relations with Orthodox Christianity as almost entirely unproblematic (Öktem 1995, 227; Ilıcak 1998; Shankland 1999).

⁶⁰ DeWeese 1994, 137. Indeed, Inner Asian ‘Sufism’ did not possess a primarily doctrinal nature and was not backed by the solid doctrinal backbone of the all-inclusive *vahdet-i vücud* (Ocak 1996, 70-71).

⁶¹ Kara 2001, 21.

⁶² Kara 2001, 25.

⁶³ Eyüboğlu 2000, 582.

⁶⁴ Zeginis 2002, 297.

residents of Constantinople organised a protest in order for their boys to be included in the *devşirme* (Christian Orthodox boy 'collection')⁶⁵.

The Roman 'Byzantine'-Ottoman continuum was formulated not only at the Ottoman elite level through marriages with Roman Christian princesses,⁶⁶ but especially at the popular level. Not only could Christians become Muslims while remaining Christian by way of the *Mevlevîyye* and *Bektaşîyye*, but also "Turks were baptised while remaining 'Muslim'"⁶⁷. As contemporary Church documents show, the custom of openly baptizing their children in a Roman Christian fashion began among the Rumelian and Anatolian Muslims ('Turks') at least as early as the mid-12th century and continued uninterrupted into the 14th and 15th centuries⁶⁸. The early 20th-century Rumelia and Anatolia travellers' reports, as Hirschon states, "corroborate the [Anatolian] refugees' stories that some Turkish mothers, believing in the beneficial effects of baptism, would have their children baptised in secret"⁶⁹. We have seen above how the 12th-century Roman Christian historian Nicetas Choniates describes in general terms the conditions of the Roman Christian population that almost all the Greek cities (of Western Asia Minor) freely *chose* to become subjects of the various Turkic emirates of the time. In reality, the Roman Christian populations of Anatolian were fleeing spiritual and material Frankish-led Byzantine oppression.

According to Öktem (based contemporary Roman Church documents), the Christian population between the 12th and 14th centuries in Anatolia was around 10-15 million, while the Inner Asia-originating Türkmen population is estimated to have been between 1.5 – 2 million immigrants⁷⁰. "During the Bronze Age, the population of Anatolia expanded, reaching an estimated level of 12 million during the late Roman Period (Russell 1958). Such a large pre-existing Anatolian population would have reduced the impact by the subsequent arrival of Turkic-speaking Seljuk and *Osmanlı* groups from Central Asia"⁷¹. That is, the Inner Asian Turkic genetic presence in late

⁶⁵ Kitsikis 1996b., 85.

⁶⁶ Orhan Gazi had married three Roman Greek wives who remained Christian, namely Horofira (Nilüfer Hatun, the mother of Sultan Murat I), Asporçe (a Roman princess) and Theodora (the daughter of the Roman Emperor, John VI Cantacuzenus). Regarding the sultans' mothers, see, for example, Meram 2000.

⁶⁷ Kitsikis 1996, 101.

⁶⁸ Paizi-Apostolopoulou 2006, 87-8.

⁶⁹ Hirschon 1998, 21.

⁷⁰ Öktem 1993, 227-8.

⁷¹ Cinnioğlu 2003, 135, quoting a population estimate from Russell, J, "Late ancient and medieval populations." *Trans Am Philos Soc*, (1958): 48 -81.

Roman Christian Anatolia may have been somewhere between 10% to 20%. Neither was genocide against the Roman Christians perpetrated, nor were forced conversions the prevailing norm in the period that followed. In fact,

..., the *Saltuknâme*, provides ample proof that a call for conversion coexisted with latitudinarian attitudes or gestures. Not that such syncretism [*sic.*] was mischievously planned by a secret organisation of the *gazis* [, warriors of ‘faith’], and the dervishes who held a conference and decided that this would be the better ‘tactic’. No one ever theorised it, either. It appears to have been a shared insight deriving from the cumulative experiences gained through the fusion of Islamic elements with the pre-Islamic beliefs of the Turks on the one hand and Anatolian Christianity on the other⁷².

Even Skalieris in his 1922 Greek nationalistic yet well-informed study of the Anatolian populations states that during the Ottoman period the dervishes in general and the Bektashis in particular “never turned against the Greeks, even if many times they turned against other Christians, especially against the Crusaders, and very often they confronted the Turks”⁷³. That is why without further elaboration the seemingly picture of ‘dervish colonisers (*kolonizatör dervişleri*)’ could be deceptive⁷⁴ - if only for the fact that

the arriving ones [(*eren(ler)* to God) *Bacıyan-ı Rum* and *Abdalan-ı Rum*, each one [group] constituting a concept, must be dervishes of [Roman Orthodox] Christian origins who had later accepted Islam. For this reason, they played an even more effective role in the [partial] Islamisation of Bursa and Anatolia in general. And one of the reasons that this Abdal class gradually disappeared in the following centuries can be *their Christian origins*...⁷⁵.

It must not be forgotten that Bithynia had long been a bastion of Roman Orthodox Christianity and indeed a haven for Orthodox Christians persecuted by the iconoclasts. During the years of Iconoclasm,

the monks’ influence became stronger as they formed larger communities. After Theodore’s Monastery of Studius in Constantinople was temporarily taken over by the iconoclast emperors, opposition to Iconoclasm became centred in the monasteries of Mount Olympus in Bithynia [...]. After the restoration of orthodoxy, [...] Mount Olympus kept the importance it had

⁷² Kafadar 1995, 72.

⁷³ Skalieris 1922, 398.

⁷⁴ On the subject, see Barkan 1949?.

⁷⁵ Kaplanoğlu 2018, 223, emphasis added.

gained. [...] Monks took a leading role not only in determining theology but in shaping a whole Christian life that had lasted effects on the Byzantine Church⁷⁶.

In Ottoman parlance, the Bithynian Olympus, i.e., today’s Uludağ even as late as the early 20th century was called, Keşiş Dağı (the Mountain of Monks). Ömer Kaptan’s *Mysia Olymposu’ndan Cebel-i Ruhban’a Uludağ’ın Kadim Tarihi: Rahip-Keşiş-Derviş* [*The Ancient History of Uludağ from the Olympus of Mysia to the Mountain of Monks: Priest-Monk-Dervish*] (2023) constitutes a superb treatment of the subject that furnishes us with newly-discovered locations and remnants of Orthodox monasteries and dervish lodges on that mountain, highlighting the need for further archaeological investigations.

Concerning the gradual pouring of the recently Islamised Turkmen nomadic populations into Anatolia after Manzikert 1077, Karakaya-Stump writes about “*the Forgotten Forefathers: Wafa’i Dervishes in Medieval Anatolia*”:

Among the first Sufis and dervishes to arrive in Anatolia, there were those who traced their spiritual and/or natural genealogies back to Abu’l-Wafa’ al-Baghdadi. A few of these have been long known to specialists in the field. These include such thirteenth and fourteenth-century figures as Ede Balı and Geyikli Baba, who are shown in the sources to be within the close circle of early Ottoman rulers; and Çelebi Hüsameddin, the close companion and deputy of the famous Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi. Their Wafa’i connection, however, has failed to receive serious and sustained attention in mainstream scholarship⁷⁷.

Now, she rightly describes the religio-political situation that emerged through the successive Turkmen migrations:

With these successive political and demographic developments, an extraordinarily complex and fluid socio-cultural landscape was established in Anatolia over the four centuries between the initial arrival of the Seljuks and the entrenchment of a pax Ottomanica circa 1500. Muslims of different ethnic and social identities, and religious orientations and temperaments – ranging from madrasa-centred Sunni juridical Islam to normative *ṭarīqa* Sufism and antinomian dervish piety with Shi’i-‘Alid tinges – commingled and cross-pollinated with an equally heterogeneous indigenous [Roman

⁷⁶ Treadgold 1997, 555. On the importance of the Bithynian Orthodox monasticism, see the invaluable study of Menthon, Bernardine: *Une terre de légendes. L’Olympe de Bithynie: Ses Saints, Ses Couvents, Ses Sites*, Paris 1935.

⁷⁷ Karakaya-Stump 2020, 90.

Orthodox] Christian population in this western-most frontier of Islam. Of these diverse social groups, the Sufis and dervishes were arguably the most palpable and ubiquitous representatives of Islam during the period under consideration⁷⁸.

What is naturally missing in her otherwise noble approach is the transition for that rather spineless early Sufism to the ontological backbone of Islam, *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* – let alone, accounting for this transition; although the largely Roman Christian-Seljuk/Ottoman Islamic inter-encapsulation was not ultimately a matter of human agreement for theophanic experiences are not the product of human activity. The crust of the matter is that Roman Ottoman/Turkish *tasavvuf* emerged fully, clearly, and permanently in Greco-Turkish Anatolia. It is the Roman Christian Graeco-Turkish Anatolia that had become the Lighthouse that would light Central Asia with divine piety and knowledge – and not the other way around. As Rumi writes:

Quicken our soul, beloved – a short while!
That from Konya radiate light of Love,
To Samarqand and Bukhara a short while!⁷⁹

It is upon this core platform that key 16th-century Ottoman historians base their assessment on knowledge and wisdom in the Roman Ottoman lands.

Gelibolulu Muştafâ ‘Âlî (d. 1600), for example, poignantly articulates this view in his writings. In his chronicle *Künhü’l-Aḥbâr*, ‘Âlî praises Sultan Meḥmet II for supporting the jurists who arrived in the Ottoman domains from the Arab and the Persian lands and for founding in the recently conquered imperial capital the famous eight madrasas... Because of these projects, the central lands of the empire (Rûm) became a “fountain of wisdoms and sciences” (*menba’-i ḥikem ve-’ulûm*), and therefore Rûmî students were no longer required to travel to foreign lands. Furthermore, Aḥḥmad b. Muştafâ Taşköprüzâde (d. 1560), in his biographical dictionary dedicated to the members of the Ottoman learned hierarchy (and other religious scholars who operated in the Ottoman domains, such as Sufi shaykhs), also describes a rupture during the reign of Meḥmet II, as will be further discussed in the following. From Meḥmet II’s reign onward, relates Taşköprüzâde, seekers of knowledge were drawn to Istanbul, instead of visiting Herat, Bukhara, and Samarqand, as their predecessors did⁸⁰.

⁷⁸ Karakaya-Stump 2020, 89-90.

⁷⁹ Schimmel 1992, p. 2.

⁸⁰ Burak 2015, 79-80.

And Rumi more explicitly:

One day, while walking with his disciples, Mevlana Celaledin [Rumi] came across some [Roman Orthodox] priests dressed in their black clothes. Some of them said about the priests, ‘How dark are these people?’ To which Rumi replied: ‘There is no one more generous than they. In this world, they gave us Islam (*Müslümanlık*), purity (*temizlik*) and worship (*ibadet*), while in the next world too, they bestowed on us the houris and the pavilions [of paradise]. What more do you want?’⁸¹.

And it is more than clear that the Roman monks either as Christian Orthodox or as the newly *Bacıyan-ı Rum* and *Abdalan-ı Rum* must have played a vital and organic role as the main conduit for this transition.

Moreover, another important dimension of the intricacies of Roman Christianity and Islam inter-encapsulation can be found in the difference between *cihad* (holy war) and *gaza* (raid). The vast majority of writers – especially Islamists – indiscriminately equate the notion of *cihad* with that of *gaza*. Yet the two terms describe two distinct types of warfare. In our view, while under certain circumstances *cihad* is seen as a primarily religious duty, *gaza* can be seen as such only from the common viewpoint of Roman Christianity and Islam. Although Kafadar argues that apart from the fact that initially the term had the simple meaning of a raid, even after it had assumed religious connotations, these had only a secondary religious significance⁸², in our view, a key religious significance operated in the substratum of the essentially common Romano-Christian-Islamic doctrine in the sense of protecting and expanding Romanity as a whole. In general, within a religious context and at least as late as the 14th century, *gaza* referred to a raid into enemy territory in which Christians could not only ‘legitimately’ participate alongside the Muslims *gazis* but often lead it. For example, in 1189 AD, the Roman locally elected ruler of Philadelphia, Theodore Mangaphas and his Türkmen troops swept down the open Lycos valley destroying everything in their path and burning down the Church of Archangel Michael situated not far from Chonai⁸³. The expansion of the Ottoman domains was largely the result of the co-operation between the Ottoman dynasty and Roman Christians, the most characteristic examples being the military commanders Michail Spanos (Köse Mihal) and Evrenos Paşa.

⁸¹ Eflaaki in Atasagun 2001, 136 (trans. by author). Eflaaki was a 14th-century Sufi historian who collected literature by and about Rumi and his disciples.

⁸² Kafadar 1995, 80.

⁸³ Ramsay 1895-7, 215-6.

Heath Lowry's enlightening study, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State*, shows: Incorporation of a 'high Islamic character' coexisting with "(somewhat paradoxically)... extensive recruitment and utilisation of both free Christians and recent converts into the elite of the newly forming Ottoman polity"⁸⁴ who "were in the fourteenth century, [as] the surviving contemporary sources suggest... a hybrid admixture formed from Anatolian Muslims and local Bithynian and later Balkan Christians"⁸⁵. Lowry's overall analysis attempts to bring to the fore the phenomenon of "an Islamochristian synthesis"⁸⁶. In reality, there was neither synthesis nor syncretism but indeed inter-encapsulation:

*There was no Byzantine decline nor Turkish triumph but, rather, the driving force of change was the successful interaction between these two spheres*⁸⁷.

As Arnakis-Georgiadis states for the forming Ottoman state-building paradigm, "the Ottomans did not try to increase the number of the Prophet's believers by violent means"⁸⁸. Kitsikis observes that "..., crossing the *beglik* of the Ottoman ruler Orhan on his way to Nicaea, the Greek historian Nicephorous Gregoras (1295-1360) ... noted that the Ottoman population in the mid-14th century was constituted in great part by "μιζοβάρβαρος" ('*mixobarbarous*'), i.e., mixed Helleno-Turks"⁸⁹. "As many Byzantine sources attest, the descendants of these [Christian-Muslim] marriages were considered 'μειζοβάρβαροι' ['*mixed barbarians*'] and they usually followed the Muslim faith, with the gradual total domination of Islam in Asia Minor"⁹⁰. Arnakis-Georgiadis states: "After the establishment of the Ottomans in the countryside around 1326, the hostilities ended ... the intermingling of the conquerors and the conquered move forward in a more normalised pace without tragic conflicts and violence. ... The [early] Ottoman agrarian class came out of this generation which was raised by Greek mothers on the fertile planes of Bithynia under more peaceful conditions [than the previously war-ridden ones]. It rose to a dominant position after marginalising the [Türkmen] nomads"⁹¹. The sixteenth-century Ottoman intellectual and

⁸⁴ Lowry, Heath: *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State*, Albany 2003, p. 131f.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 133.

⁸⁶ Lowry (2003), p. 137.

⁸⁷ So reads the blurb to Beihammer, Alexander Daniel: *Byzantium and the Emergence of Muslim-Turkish Anatolia, ca. 1040-1130*, London 2017.

⁸⁸ Arnakis-Georgiadis, George 2008/1947, 137.

⁸⁹ Kitsikis 1996, 173-4.

⁹⁰ Savvides 1996, 51.

⁹¹ Arnakis-Georgiadis 2008/1947, 165.

bureaucrat, Gelibolulu Muştafa ‘Âlî, described in the same manner the lineage of the majority of the Rumelian and Anatolian people:

...most of the inhabitants of Rum are of confused ethnic origins. Among its notables, there are few whose lineage does not go back to a convert to Islam ...either on their father’s or their mother’s side, the genealogy is traced to a filthy infidel. It is as if two different species of fruit-bearing tree mingled and mated, with leaves and fruits; and the fruit of this union was large and filled with liquid, like a princely pearl. The best qualities of the progenitors were manifested and gave distinction, either in physical beauty, or in spiritual wisdom⁹².

In other words, the inter-encapsulation was both physical and spiritual/intellectual. At the turn of the 20th century, Ramsay noted that

[t]he Turks of the Central [Anatolian] Plateau have varied distinctly from the Asiatic type, and have approximated a different type, which I should be disposed to recognise as the old Anatolian⁹³.

He notes that “[t]he racial fact that the Turk has melted into the old Anatolian stock has struck every observant traveller that I have met”⁹⁴. What is astonishing about the historical reality of Ottoman Romanity is that today’s modern genetic research confirms ‘the minor genetic influence of Turkic speakers’ on the Anatolian Roman population, estimating the current Turkic population in Turkey to range from 4.6% to 30% of its total population⁹⁵ - almost the same levels as those estimated for the 11th – 14th centuries!

All in all, we should not forfeit the fact that the emergence of the Ottoman Emirate has been shrouded in historical mystery. No matter how historical convention assigns the date 1299 to its, we should not forget that, as the most worthy researcher of Ottoman Bursa, Raif Kaplanoğlu tells us, not even the name of Osman Gazi is mentioned in contemporary Seljuk and Ilkanid/Mogol sources - let alone any information on the establishment of a beglik; the name of Osman Gazi is referred to only in Roman (‘Byzantine’) sources, namely, Pachemeres. All in all, the Ottoman beglik was established by Emir Orhan Gazi in 1327 AD and this not in the full sense of the term, since it remained subject to paying tributary taxes to the Ilhanids until 1413 AD. “In light of these evidence, it can be said that the Ottoman state became

⁹² Fleischer 1986, 254.

⁹³ Ramsay 1916, 16.

⁹⁴ Ramsay 1916, 17.

⁹⁵ Cinnioğlu 2003, 135.

an independent state from 1413 onwards”⁹⁶. Concussively, the Roman Pontic origins of the Ottoman Dynasty that Fatih Sultan Mehmed argued for himself⁹⁷ is way more probable historically than a family connection to either the Anatolian Seljuk Sultan, Süleyman Şah, or Oğuz Han – the later claim being establish by way of official propaganda campaigns during the reign of Emir Murad I (1362-1389 AD) driven by the concept “*Tengride kut bulmuş*”. But this is something that we explore – God Willing – elsewhere. For now, it suffices to say that in his article, *Greeks and Türkmens: The Pontic Exception*, Anthony Bryer consumes almost three pages on marital trees to schematise the innumerable intermarriages between the Roman Christian Orthodox Comnenian Dynasty of the Empire of Trebizond and Türkmen nobles...

The ‘Metadoxical’ Ottomans

In the words of Öz, “up to the period of Fatih Sultan Mehmed, the Alevi-Sunni differentiation did not create any problems”⁹⁸. Indeed, as we shall see in Chapter 3, it was not until the late 15th-early 16th century AD that this religious differentiation became a politically derived separation – yet not utter division. It was at that time that the Ottoman state became concerned with issues of Sunni ‘orthodoxy’⁹⁹. For the earlier period Kafadar argues for an Ottoman ‘metadoxy’, which goes beyond conceptualisations of Sunni orthodoxy and Alevi heterodoxy.¹⁰⁰ I have long suggested that his proposed ‘metadoxy’ comprised the various forms of Roman ‘*vahdet-i vücud*’ religiosity plus its Orthodox Christian counterpart; metadoxy only on the sense of ‘after/beyond created doxa (glory, opinion)’, i.e., uncreated divine energy, or else, true orthodoxy in Christian and Islamic terms.

Roman *Ahilik* (*Ahiyyân-ı Rum*), the *fütüvvet* ‘organisation’, was a distinctively important type of *tasavvufî* organisation widespread in the 14th-century Anatolian *begliks* (principalities) that succeeded the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum¹⁰¹. These groups played a pivotal role in the establishment of the

⁹⁶ Kaplanoğlu 2023, 374.

⁹⁷ Spandounes 1977, 11.

⁹⁸ Öz 1999, 148.

⁹⁹ Kafadar 1995, 73.

¹⁰⁰ Kafadar 1995, 76.

¹⁰¹ On the issue of *Ahilik*, see, for example, Anadol 2001 and Arnakis-Georgiadis 2008/1947. For a less academic yet informative approach, see Demir (2000). For a more Nationalist-Islamist perspective, see Ceylan, Kazım. *Ahilik: Türk-İslam Medeniyetinde Dünyevi ve Uhrevi Sistem* [*Ahilik: A Worldly and Otherworldly*

Ottoman state. The 14th-century Arab traveller Ibn Battuta, who travelled in Anatolia in the early 1330s, described the Anatolian *Ahi* organisations as widespread and active¹⁰². There is a tradition that the *Ahis* conferred legitimacy upon the founder of the Ottoman state, Osman Bey, by girding him with their belt in a ceremony at his accession, and that in the same manner, they showed respect to his son, Orhan Bey, whom they assisted in his conquests with their forces¹⁰³. According to some sources, "Osman Gazi, his son Orhan Gazi and [Sultan] Murad I were all *Ahi şeyhs*, and leaders of dervishes (*mürşid(ler)*). Some of the diplomas they conferred [on disciples] can be found in the Ottoman archives"¹⁰⁴. According to Akdağ, the leaders of the Bektashi dervishes (Bektashi *babalar*) were consistent supporters of the Ottomans at the time of the establishment of their state.¹⁰⁵

The influence of Ibn Arabi was pervasive throughout the history of Ottoman Islam. In the words of Knysh, the Ottoman rulers "came to view Ibn Arabi as the patron saint of their dynasty"¹⁰⁶. According to Robinson, "the rise of the Ottoman state brought him to the forefront – together with the controversies associated with him in the context of orthodox [*sic*] Islam. His Sufi vision remained the underpinning of popular Sufism down to the twentieth century, although admittedly from the early nineteenth century it did come under increasingly heavy fire from *movements of [Islamist] revival and [Western-oriented] reform*"¹⁰⁷. Öztürk observes that "[t]he theories of Ibn 'Arabî ... dominated and pervaded the Ottoman intellectual scene. The official 'ulama' and the educational institutions were the centre

System in the Turkish-Islamic Civilization]. Ankara: Gümrük ve Ticaret Bakanlığı, 2012.

¹⁰² Ibn Battuta 1962, 419.

¹⁰³ Noyan (Dedebaba) 1998, 390, quoting Önder, Mehmed (1976), *Kırşehir Güldestesi* [*The Anthology of Kırşehir*], Nüve Matb., Ankara. The story that assigns the "Girding with the Sword" of the Ottoman Sultan to the Mevlevis, and claims that Sultan Veled began this tradition by attaching the sword to Sultan Osman, is concocted (Gölpınarlı 1953, 178, note [218]). The Mevlevi involvement in that tradition begins in the early 19th century during the reign of Mahmud II (or at the end of the 18th century at the most) – who would later (1826) abolish the *Yeniçeris* and persecute their spiritual mentors, the Bektashis. In the preceding period, the Ağa of the *Yeniçeris* played a central role in that ceremony.

¹⁰⁴ Noyan (Dedebaba) 1998, 425.

¹⁰⁵ Noyan (Dedebaba) 1998, 219, citing Mustafa Akdağ, "Türkiye'nin İktisâdî ve İçtimâî Tarihinde Dinî İnançlar [Religious Beliefs in the Economic and Social History of Turkey]." in Sümer, Ali. *Hacı Bektâş Velî'nin Bilimsel Yönleri* [*The Scientific Aspects of Hacı Bektâş Velî*]. Ankara: 1975.

¹⁰⁶ Knysh 1999, 4.

¹⁰⁷ Robinson 1997, 166, emphasis ours.

from which the theory of *wahdat al-wujud* was propagated and spread. The works and efforts of prominent Sufis such as Jalal al-Din [Rumi], Sadr al-Din Qonawi [Tr. Sadreddin Konevi (d. 1274 AD)], Yunus Emre and Davud of Kayseri [Tr. Davud-ı Kayseri] brought the theories to the masses”¹⁰⁸.

To beginning with, “tradition has it that Osman (d. 1299), founder of the Ottoman dynasty, was the disciple of a sufi *şeyh*, Edebali”¹⁰⁹. “[T]he Ottomans’ own origin mythology, which was crafted by later authors in the fifteenth and sixteenth century, posited an organic link between the Ottoman dynasty and Sufi leaders. Several accounts hold that the founder of the empire, ‘Osman (r. 1299–1324), fell in love with Malhatun, the daughter of a local shaykh named Edebali, a spiritual descendant of the aforementioned Vefa’i shaykh Baba İlyas. However, Edebali was not just a Sufi; fragmentary sources suggest he was also a local governor of the region around Bilecek, and issued judicial *fetvas*. Such activities indicated a figure of significant social and political stature, whose support an aspiring local hegemon would want to cultivate... What this illustrates is the degree to which Ottoman imperial ideology came to imbue its sovereignty with Sufi themes”¹¹⁰.

After his death in 1326, Osman was succeeded by his son Orhan, who around 1330 AD invited one of the most renowned commentators of Ibn Arabi, Şeyh Davud b. Mahmud-ür-Rumi-ül Kayseri (d. 1351 AD) to hold the post of the director (*müderris*) of the first Ottoman *medrese* in Iznik (Nicaea)¹¹¹. “Thus it came about that a man of the way of Ibn Arabi was appointed to the most influential academic position in the newly founded empire, and thus the teachings of Ibn Arabi became from the very start integral to the way of the Empire itself over the next half millennium”¹¹². Apart from its practical implications, the appointment had also a symbolic significance, particularly since appointments in the early Ottoman *medreses* were based on the personal choice and preference of their patron founder. This significance is further accentuated by the fact that the character of the religious institution was dominated by its principal scholar (*müderris*): “It was ... the *müderris* himself who was important and not the institution”¹¹³.

Kayseri’s appointment was important from the point of view of the Ottoman religious (and epistemological) worldview, which underlies the

¹⁰⁸ Öztürk 1981, 413.

¹⁰⁹ Holbrook 1991.

¹¹⁰ Curry 2021, 400.

¹¹¹ Kazancıgil 2000, 27. On Davud-ı Kayseri see Bayrakdar, Mehmed, *Kayserili Dâvûd (Dâvûdu'l-Kayseri)*. Ankara: [Türkiye] Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 1988.

¹¹² Ryan (1997). Ryan reports the proceedings of the 1st International Symposium on al-Qaysari [Tr. el-Kayseri], which took place in Kayseri between 23-26 October 1997.

¹¹³ Bilge 1984, XIII.

typology of state-religion relations. Bilge evaluates it as follows: “...Sheikh Davud-ı Kayseri, who assumed his duties as the first director of the Orhan Gazi Medrese in İznik [Nicaea], was steeped in knowledge of the *intellectual sciences* (*aklî ilimler*), and there are various books of his on these topics. The appointment to the first *medrese* by Orhan Gazi of someone with such advanced knowledge of metaphysical sciences is sufficient to show the degree of importance attached to the intellectual sciences in parallel with the *traditional sciences* (*naklî ilimler*) in that era”¹¹⁴. According to Tahrallı, this appointment meant that “official teaching itself was set in motion by a great master of the Akbarian school. We may understand this event ... as a synthesis or alliance between the exoteric and the esoteric sciences, and between rational and esoteric knowledge”¹¹⁵. In the Ottoman paradigm, “the near eastern institutions of the *medrese* and the *tekke/tekye* were re-founded on a parallel footing. Both may be seen as kinds of colleges, the *medrese* offering instruction to students with sufficient preparation in the ‘Arabic sciences’ according to the established syllabi and leading to careers in law and education. The *tekke* dervish house was a centre where masters recognized for their spiritual prestige and learning in any number of fields of learning accepted students on a basis of individual affiliation”¹¹⁶.

An important point for the nature of Roman Islam and Turkish secularism is also the status of women. In the Ottoman capital, Bursa, around 1333, “the Arab traveller [Ibn Battuta] was astonished that Turkish women were strolling around unveiled; he talks about it and says ‘their faces were showing because they were unveiled’”¹¹⁷. As Arnakis-Georgiadis argues, “[Ibn Battuta’s] testimony shows that not only women did not occupy a lower position but, on the contrary, they enjoyed an extraordinarily honorific one, which in a certain sense, could be higher than that of men”¹¹⁸.

An important religious personality of Anatolia was the founder of the *vahdet-i vücud*-centred and strongly Aristotelian¹¹⁹ *Bayramiyye*, Hacı Bayram-ı Velî (c. 1350 – 1430 AD), who had very close spiritual relations with the Ottoman elite during the reign of Sultan Murad II (r. 1421 - 1451) and a great popular following. Analysing the different contributions of Hacı Bayram-ı Velî and the *Bayramis*, Cebecioğlu provides us with a conclusion

¹¹⁴ Bilge 1984, 42.

¹¹⁵ Tahrallı 1999, accessed April 3, 2009. <http://www.ibnarabisociety.org/articles/ottomanera.html>.

¹¹⁶ Holbrook 1991, 23.

¹¹⁷ Noyan (Dedebaba), 143, quoting İbn-i Batuta, *Seyahatnâme*, 368-369.

¹¹⁸ Arnakis-Georgiadis 2008/1947, 149.

¹¹⁹ Eyüboğlu 1997, 165.

relevant to the majority of the popular *tarikats* – as Özdemir’s broader analysis shows as well. On the ‘cultural’, i.e., religious side,

[g]etting free from the influence of Arab and Persian culture and settling down with the independence of the Turkish language in Anatolia, [Hacı Bayram-ı Velî] played a significant role in the strengthening and development of the Ottoman state¹²⁰.

From the economic point of view, he established a network of social security for poor people, widows, and orphans. One of the most important functions of the *tarikats*, particularly in the early Ottoman period, was their contribution to the process of sedentarisation of the Inner Asian Turkic tribes: “his other contribution ... was to lead the nomadic Turkish clans into a settled life”¹²¹. In other words, the state-centralisation and sedentarisation of the Turkic nomads took place within a Roman *vahdet-i vücud* framework. The different functions performed by the *tarikats* in cooperation with the state in general included a mixture of religious, judicial, administrative, educational, military, economical and social ones¹²². All of these can be clearly seen in the pre-19th-century Ottoman era.

We have already seen the Roman Christian-Islamic virtue of *diakrisis* or *al-furqān* (‘discernment’, ‘differentiation’, ‘discrimination’). This virtue must have operated in the early 15th-century *tasavvufi* authors of Καλλιπολις/Gelibolu, the Yazıcıoğlu brothers Mehmed Yazıcıoğlu and Ahmed Bican in their attempt to parochialise and delimit the Islamic understanding of the Türkmen populations, especially with regard Roman Orthodox Christianity.

A consequence of the Orthodox Christian political and social presence in the Yazıcıoğlu’s homeland was that philosophical conversations between members of the two confessional communities were inevitable. In fact, there survive many records of inter-confessional dialogues on religious subjects occurring in and around Gelibolu throughout the Yazıcıoğlu’s lifetimes. Some of these dialogues expressed the conviction that the two religious systems of Islam and Christianity were compatible and the lines between them unclear. Specifically, both Muslims and Christians felt a confusion as to the relative positions of Jesus and Muḥammad in the hierarchy of prophets. In Latifi’s *Tezkire*, for instance, we read of a preacher in Bursa’s largest mosque who advocated the superiority of Jesus over Muḥammad. The Yazıcıoğlu wrote their texts in part as a response to these sentiments favouring religious union: They aimed to differentiate Islam from Christianity,

¹²⁰ Cebecioğlu 2000, 37.

¹²¹ Cebecioğlu 2000, 37.

¹²² Özdemir 1994, 305.

defining the former’s identity for their frontier congregation, eradicating the confusion of the borderlands and fashioning a conflict between two distinct pious visions¹²³.

So, we see that *the genesis of Ottoman-Turkish Islam was the product of an intra-differentiation and intra-separation from Roman Christianity as from a living womb*; in the case of Roman Christianity and Roman Islam the effort was to move from intra-relations to inter-relations, yet in today’s so-called interfaith dialogues the movement is the other way around, i.e., from inter- to intra-... And this is most interesting considering the fact that at the first half of the 15th century in the face of a *de facto* union between Orthodox Christianity and *vahdet-i vücud tasavvufi* Islam at the popular level there were great efforts spent on the part of the Frankish Papists and their local Byzantine intellectual-political clients to impose a destructive pseudo-union upon the Roman Orthodox Ecclesia of the Lord Jesus Christ (the infamous Ferrara-Florence Synod), that the latter vehemently rejected.

Thus,

The Yazıcıoğlu’s approached the Islamic canon that they had inherited in a discriminating manner... The Yazıcıoğlu were particularly drawn towards ecumenical expressions that effaced the differences between the schisms and schools of thought of Islam, presenting a uniform and harmonious model of a single ‘community of Muḥammad’ (*ümmet-i Muḥammed*), distinct from the Christian and syncretistic communities around them. They also showed an inclination towards a broadly uncontroversial Sufism characteristic of their time and place. The primary personal relationship that they chose to celebrate in their writings was the one to the Sufi leader Ḥacı Bayram Velī, whose community in Ankara constituted their ethical anchor point in their later lives. Through the Bayramīs, the Yazıcıoğlu brothers accessed the theosophical vocabulary of the Andalusian mystic Ibn ‘Arabī (d. 1240) and, thereby, entered a wider conversation on its meaning and acceptability, a conversation that simultaneously played out in the Timurid and Turkmen lands to the east. Adapting Ibn ‘Arabī’s message to a more accessible sacred-historical framework, they contributed one more voice to the eventual Ottoman consensus on Akbarian Sunnī mysticism¹²⁴.

One of the seminal religious functionaries of the Ottomans was Şemseddin Mehmed bin Hamza-el Fenari (d. 1430 AD), the founder of a prominent family of Ottoman scholars, the history of which stretches across the length of the 15th century. Fenari, who has traditionally been characterised as the first Ottoman *Şeyhülislâm*, was steeped in Aristotelian and Akbarian thought.

¹²³ Grenier, Carlos (2021-08-30T23:58:59.000).

¹²⁴ Grenier, Carlos (2021-08-30T23:58:59.000).

“Like [Davud-ı] Kayseri, the first director of the *Iznik Orhaniyye Medrese*, *Şeyhülislâm* Molla Fenarî, who was educated in that *medrese*, was one of the important personalities of the *medrese-tekke* synthesis”¹²⁵. “His father was a Sufi master of the initiatory line of al-Qūnawī [Tr Konevi]. He wrote a commentary on the *Miftāh al-Ghayb* of al- Qūnawī”¹²⁶. When at the beginning of the 15th century Sultan Çelebi Mehmed “established a new *medrese* in Bursa (later named the Sultaniya of Bursa), he appointed Muhammad Shah, a son of Allama Samsuddin Fanarî, as its first professor. Muhammad Shah gave his first open lecture for students, teachers and the general public when he was only 18 years of age. This was the first method introduced by the Ottoman educational system and it was followed by his successors”¹²⁷.

During the 15th century, particularly the reign of Fatih Sultan Mehmed (1451–1481 AD), Ottoman-Aristotelian *kelam* scholarship reached its zenith. It was a zenith largely in terms of activity rather than originality, in the sense that what was generated was primarily glosses on Abdallah ibn Umar al- Baydawi (d. c. 1286 AD) and Adud al-Din al-Ijî (1281–1355 AD). Among the most important *kelam* scholars of the time was Hasan Çelebi ibn Muhammad- shah el-Fenari (d. 1481), Hadizade el-Rumi (d. ca. 1436-1446 AD) and Lutfi (d. 1494 AD). In general, before the 19th century,

*[t]he reconciliation of Kelam – Tasavvuf constituted the Ottoman mentality. Ottoman mentality was based on holiness (and the ‘heart’, not on critical intellect) ... The Ottoman mentality, which did not allow for too critical a mind[set], and the power Sufism acquired, increased the importance of poetry as a means of understanding and expression*¹²⁸.

The “reconciliation” that Taner refers to, which is the *sinallilia* as a differentiated unity of Philosophy (intellect) – Theophany (heart), was only possible within the epistemological framework the *vahdet-i vücud* provided.

¹²⁵ Oğuzoğlu 2000, 188.

¹²⁶ Tahralı 1999, 49.

¹²⁷ Bilge 1984, xiii.

¹²⁸ Taner 1998, 60, emphasis ours. Interestingly Taner, citing Louis Massignon (for the latter’s generally anti-Akbarian stance, see also Chapter 5), says that Ottoman *tasavvuf* did not accept *vahdet-i vücud*. He put forward a single case for his contention, namely that of the Ottoman poet Nesimi, who was executed due to his belief in the doctrine of the unity of being. This is puzzling, since İmadeddin Nesimi (d. 1417 AD) was skinned alive in Aleppo by the order of the Mamluk ruler of Egypt, Şeyh el- Müeyyed Seyfeddin (Mélikoff 1999, 167). There was no Ottoman involvement in his death.

In the 15th century, the basic features of the teaching of Ibn Arabi are more or less equal to Sufism (*Sūfilik*) – the Sufis had won great prestige as a group and stood on the same level as the theologians¹²⁹.

Or else,

[The] *ṭarīqa* connections, elaborated in internal Sufi histories, were certainly undercut and bridged by personal ones across *ṭarīqa* lines. For instance, a persistent tradition links Eşrefoğlu Rumî, a Qādirî Sufi and poet, to the circle of Hâcî Bayram. *What these fifteenth-century communities all held in common, beyond their mystical approach to piety, was that they each grappled with the legacy of the influential theosophy of the thirteenth-century mystic and philosophy Ibn al-‘Arabî*¹³⁰.

Until recently, modern commentators, following almost exclusively the prevailing Western Arabism/Iranianism in Islamic studies, utilised the various revolts against the Ottomans and the relevant involvement of dervishes and *tarikats* to portray a picture of ‘orthodoxy’ vs. ‘heterodoxy’, failing to see the latter’s continuous and intimate relations with and their mutual support for/from the Ottoman state as well. As the source of the inter-encapsulation of religion and politics of pre-19th-century Roman Ottoman Anatolia-Rumelia, i.e., the core of the Empire, *vahdet-i vücud* was so central and predominant for the people in general that no aspirant to state-building could ignore it – the more so since the prospective rulers were themselves part of this predominantly *vahdet-i vücud* milieu. In fact, this predominance is exactly the point that the various revolt-propagating *vahdet-i vücud*-related themes and their huge mobilisation potential prove. An example of such serious revolts in the 15th century was the Islamic-Christian one led by the Akbarian Turco-Greek Şeyh Simavnalı Kadısoğlu Bedreddin (1368-1420) in 1416¹³¹. In fact, as Yalrkaya states,

[Bedreddin’s] ideas could have been seen as an innovation and a change in the *tasavvuf* world. Yet these had been debated by Islamic philosophers for hundreds of years; and even hundreds of years before the latter, they were put forward by the [ancient] Greek philosophers ... Bedreddin’s power is not in his expressing these ideas. His full power and courage is his putting them

¹²⁹ Schubert 1996, 442.

¹³⁰ Grenier, Carlos (2021-08-30T23:58:59.000), emphasis added.

¹³¹ Şeyh Bedreddin was the son of Gazi Israil and the daughter of the Roman Christian Commander of the castle of Didimotichon/Dimetoka in Thrace (Yalrkaya 1994/1924, 179). For a comprehensive treatment of Şeyh Bedreddin Simaveni, see Balivet 2000, Yalrkaya 1994/1924, and Kaygusuz 2005.

into practice and creating a *tarikât* based on them. Bedreddin lived out these ideas as well as causing them to live¹³².

For his Roman Christian-Islamic rebels, “the bad administration of Yıldırım Beyazid had destroyed the order of the Ottoman state”¹³³- which was originally based on *tasavvufî* ideals. This Roman Christian-Islamic revolt against the Ottomans was not against the Ottoman state as such, but what was perceived to be its current deviation from its authentic form, i.e., the Roman *vahdet-i vücud* order. It is interesting to note that the Roman Christians perceived Şeyh Bedreddin as the

the Christ who had returned to the earth again¹³⁴.

The Apex of Islamo-Christian Romanity or the Islamo-Christian Roman Renaissance: The reign of Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed

Undoubtedly the most enlightened of the Ottoman Sultans, Fatih Sultan Mehmed, who lived in a highly inter-encapsulated Islamic-Christian milieu, showed enormous interest in studying and commissioning works on theology (both Roman Christian and Islamic), philosophy (especially Aristotle and the Stoics) and geography. Fatih Sultan Mehmed had shown a great curiosity towards religion and metaphysics, among them ‘non-Sunni’ *tarikats*, since his youth. During his reign, “we witness one of the most striking symbolic examples of religious pluralism at the time of the capture of Istanbul, in that two mentors are found at Fatih Sultan Mehmed’s side: Molla Gürani and Akşemseddin. One was a leader of the religious bureaucracy and the other a leader of popular Islam”¹³⁵. Kara calls Akşemseddin (d. 1459 AD) “the spiritual conqueror of Istanbul”¹³⁶. As a *tasavvuf* master, a scholar-physician and a poet, Akşemseddin represents “the type of *ulema* who, by exerting influence on the Ottoman sultan, ensured the formation of his worldview”¹³⁷. Akşemseddin was a *medrese*-originating pupil of Hacı Bayram-ı Velî, whom he succeeded (as *halife*) after his death. “One of Akşemseddin’s books, *Hall-i Müşkilât* (1452), strove to counter the attacks made against Muhyiddin-i Arabi and other

¹³² Yaltkaya 1938, 222-3.

¹³³ Kaygusuz 2005, 103.

¹³⁴ Kaygusuz 2005, 89.

¹³⁵ Çamuroğlu 1996, 133.

¹³⁶ Kara 1999, 280.

¹³⁷ Oğuzoğlu 2000, 206.

great Sufis like him by comparing them with well-known *ulema* and *şeyhs* such as Kuşeyri, Gazalî, Bağdadî, [and] Necmeddin-i Kübra”¹³⁸. According to Bektashi sources, one of the closest friends of Fatih Sultan Mehmed was the Bektashi master Deniz Abdal, who was buried in the *Uşşâkî tekke* in the Şehremini district of Istanbul¹³⁹. Moreover, there are several Bektashi poems written under the pseudonym Avnî, which was the pen-name of Fatih Sultan Mehmed¹⁴⁰.

For Fatih Sultan Mehmed, *tasavvuf* “was a divine synthesis of religious feeling, the measure of morals, the arts, and the enquiring intellect, relating to a global framework”¹⁴¹. We have already mentioned the overwhelming presence of *tasavvuf* works in his personal library. As a natural result of his affection for *tasavvuf*, he was a lover of philosophy, the Aristotelian sultan *par excellence*¹⁴². One of the personalities close to the Ottoman sultan was the famous Roman Christian philosopher and professor of peripatetic (Aristotelian) philosophy, Georgios Amoirouzis (d. 1470 AD). Amoirouzis had taken part in the unionist synods of Ferrara and Florence (1437-1473 AD) as one of the representatives of the unionist Byzantine emperor, John VIII Palaiologos (r. 1425-1448 AD). However, seeing upon his return to Constantinople in 1440 that the entire Roman Christian population opposed the union, he abandoned both Constantinople and the unionist project, and returned to his birthplace, the Pontic Trabzon¹⁴³. With the help of his Arabic-speaking son, Amoirouzis translated Batlamius’ *Geografia*, in which the toponyms were written in both Greek and Arabic¹⁴⁴. The poetry written in Greek, a language the sultan knew, and dedicated to Fatih Sultan Mehmed by Amoirouzis, is indicative of the prevailing mentalities and interpenetrating relations of both sides:

Emperor, the Greatest of all Emperors, Khan, Highest of all Highest...
Hail! You brilliant star, Hail! You shining luminary,
Hail! You lover of the sciences, And conversant with the Muses...
You have proved that you are the best Monarch of the Greeks,
How can your governance be considered foreign governance for us? All
these lands are yours; how can they be foreign to you?

¹³⁸ Oğuzoğlu 2000, 207.

¹³⁹ Noyan (Dedebaba) 2000, 46.

¹⁴⁰ Noyan (Dedebaba) 2000, 45-7.

¹⁴¹ Ayverdi 1990, 37.

¹⁴² For a summary and important treatment of the subject of Fatih Sultan Mehmed’s Aristotelianism, see Balivet 1986.

¹⁴³ Mirmiroğlu 1945, 94.

¹⁴⁴ Armağan 2003, 316-7.

You behave like our own son by putting an end to the yoke of captivity,
 Alexander, who was from our own race, absorbed into himself the good
 traits of the Persians, [i.e., you absorb the good traits of the Greeks too]
 Hail! You King who uses weapons like Achilles ...¹⁴⁵.

The reference to Alexander from a Roman Aristotelian is important within the Ottoman intellectual framework of the time since, contrary to late Byzantine depictions and conceptualisations of ‘Turks’ as Persians, the Ottomans conceptualised themselves more in the role of ‘Greeks’, in the sense that they identified themselves with the main protagonists of Ahmedī’s *İskender-nâme* of 1390 (The Epos of Alexander the Great), Alexander and his vizier *Arestātālīs* (Aristotle). The *İskender-nâme*, a work written from a *tasavvufi* point of view with essentially educational purposes, was extremely popular with audiences as far apart as Edirne and Shiraz¹⁴⁶ and was also heavily valued by the Ottoman elite and the *Yeniçeri* army of the 15th century. In the work, Aristotle, Alexander and Darius represent the intellect, the soul and the evil-centred ego respectively. One of the most important differences from the ancient Greek sources on Alexander’s life and achievements is that it exalts the Macedonian Greek, the *Rum Kaysarı* (Roman Caesar) as it calls him, even more than his Greek compatriots, depicting him as the ruler of the whole world who had defeated even the Chinese¹⁴⁷.

Just as Alexander had a special admiration for the heroes of Homer’s *Iliad*, particularly Achilles, whose tomb at Troy he visited in May 334 B.C., Fatih Sultan Mehmed, a great admirer of Homer, had the *Iliad* translated from Roman Greek into Turkish for his personal library¹⁴⁸. Moreover, at the beginning of his Mytilene campaign in 1462 AD, Fatih Sultan Mehmed commemorated the Greek heroes, Achilles and Ajax, by ordering Ciriaco of Ancona to begin excavations for unearthing their graves¹⁴⁹ – that is 400 years before Heinrich Schliemann! As Monfasani states, it is extraordinary that, during the siege of Constantinople, the sultan, who knew Greek, had Ciriaco of Ancona read to him valiant deeds from Herodotus, Livy and other ancient historians¹⁵⁰. Livy’s *Ab Urbe Condita* was a monumental historical

¹⁴⁵ Mirmiroğlu 1945, 98-101

¹⁴⁶ Aḥmedī 1983, 13, emphasis ours.

¹⁴⁷ Aḥmedī 1983, 40.

¹⁴⁸ Armağan 2003, 317.

¹⁴⁹ Armağan 2003, 317, citing Kritovoulos and various German sources.

¹⁵⁰ Monfasani 1976, 186. Citing multiple contemporary sources (including later works of George Trapezountios), Monfasani exposes the errors in Patrinelis’ claim

account of Rome from its founding around 753 B.C. up to his own time (59 BC-17 AD).

Balivet states that “Aristotelianism presents itself as a bridge between two hostile religious worlds. It guarantees the objectivity of extra-confessionalism, and ends up in being the compulsory road to any inter-religious agreement”¹⁵¹. Moreover, “it turns out that philosophical stance is one of the determining factors in the choice of ideological opinion of the last Byzantine intellectuals of the 15th century ...; and that those who remained in Byzantium under Turkish rule were usually students of [Aristotle’s] Lyceum and not of [Plato’s] Academy”¹⁵². In reality, the ‘road to inter-religious agreement’ was not Aristotelianism as such but the inter-encapsulation between Roman Christianity and Roman Islam.

Barely two months after the conquest of Constantinople, in July 1453, another Roman Christian Aristotelian scholar, Georgios Trapezountios, addressed his essay titled “*On the Truth of the Faith of the Christians*” to Fatih Sultan Mehmed, arguing that Islam and Orthodox Christianity did not exhibit insurmountable differences in terms of doctrine¹⁵³. Monfasani describes Trapezountios as “a very pious Christian [sic.] and familiar of popes, who risked his life to tell Mehmed II, the conqueror of Constantinople, that he (Mehmed) was the King of Kings and Destined Ruler of the whole world”¹⁵⁴. “Teacher of Popes Eugen IV, Nicholas V, Callixtus III and Pius II, and protected by them, he always shared the idea of reconstructing a great universal empire which, after the conquest of Constantinople, should have been led by the Sultan as the unique and legitimate ‘Roman’ *basileus*”¹⁵⁵. As a substitute for Eastern – Western Christian union, he urges Fatih to unite Islam and Christianity, and also threatens him by stating that unless he does so the sultan will be personally punished, he will lose his empire, and someone else will succeed in that task¹⁵⁶. In other words, he points out the already-existing differentiated unity of Roman Christianity and Roman Islam as the core of a present and future Roman universal state.

Around 1478, Patriarch Maximus III (1476-1482 AD) at Ottoman *Konstantiniyye* addressed the Venetian Doge, Giovanni Mocenigo, regarding

that the Roman Sultan did not know Greek (Patrinelis, G. Christos, “Mehmed II the Conqueror and His Presumed Knowledge of Greek and Latin.” *Viator* Vol. 2 (1972): 349-354).

¹⁵¹ Balivet 1986, 242.

¹⁵² Balivet 1986, 248.

¹⁵³ A copy of this document can be found in Zoras 1954, 93-165.

¹⁵⁴ Monfasani 1976, ix.

¹⁵⁵ Bádenas (n.d.).

¹⁵⁶ Trapezountios in Zoras 1954, 164.

the rights of the Roman Orthodox Patriarchate in the Venetian-occupied Roman areas: “Even though he is of a different religion, the Sultan allows us freedom of opinion and faith; should it not be that you, who are Christians, respect all the more the rights of the Orthodox Patriarchate?”¹⁵⁷. In fact, such was the proximity of Fatih Sultan Mehmed to Roman Christianity that the question of his Christianity still lingers in Turkey. On 19th December 1991 the Turkish magazine *Aktüel* published an article titled “Was Fatih Christian? Historians have not been able to resolve this mystery for 500 years”¹⁵⁸. There are many signs of Fatih Sultan Mehmed’s personal relation to Roman Christianity, as well as indications of Roman *sinallilia*-based state-religion relations in institutional terms. Among these are: the re-institution of the ecumenical Orthodox Patriarchate with the appointment of the Aristotelian¹⁵⁹ Saint Georgios Gennadios Scholarios as the first Ottoman Patriarch (to the joy of the Roman people of the Empire, who had been religiously oppressed by the generally uniate Palaiologans¹⁶⁰); the sultan’s commissioned treatises on Orthodox Christianity¹⁶¹; the presence of Christian icons in his private quarters¹⁶²; his burial in the common burial place of the Roman Emperors (the Church of Agioi Apostoloi)¹⁶³; his use, among other titles, of *Kaysar*¹⁶⁴ (*-ı-Rum*) (Emperor of Rome) as an official title; and the visit of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Athanasios, to Istanbul in 1458 AD.

As Hattox states, Patriarch Athanasios’ visit to Fatih Sultan Mehmed was extraordinary not only because he travelled to Constantinople in person but because

in 1458, Mehmed was not, in the context of the Islamic tradition, the sovereign of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem; the Greek Orthodox patriarch was neither a subject of the Ottoman sultan nor a sovereign in his own right. For two hundred years the patriarchs [of Jerusalem] had been subjects of the Mamluk sultan, and would remain so for some thirty years¹⁶⁵.

As can be seen from his role in the selection and installation of Patriarch Gennadios, the Ottoman Sultan “tried to fill some of the [‘Byzantine’] Emperor’s functions as head of the Greek Orthodox

¹⁵⁷ Paizi-Apostolopoulou 2006, 100.

¹⁵⁸ Kitsikis 1996, 178.

¹⁵⁹ Balivet 1986, 246.

¹⁶⁰ Gibbon 1827, 187-8.

¹⁶¹ Mirmiroğlu 1945, 60.

¹⁶² Kitsikis 1996, 179.

¹⁶³ Koçu 1981, 86 and Kitsikis 1996, 180.

¹⁶⁴ Kitsikis 2007, 35.

¹⁶⁵ Hattox 2000, 109.

Church”¹⁶⁶. Following the practice of earlier Muslim rulers in granting a degree of self-government to the Christian communities, the Sultan “officially subordinated all the traditionally autocephalous Orthodox Sees already in his empire to the authority of the patriarch of Constantinople, who in turn would answer to him”¹⁶⁷. Yet by conferring the symbols of his office on the patriarch “he set a precedent whereby the authority of the patriarch came not solely from election and consecration by the Orthodox clergy, but also flowed from the sultan as well. In this he was not only confirming his ultimate authority over his Orthodox subjects, but also assuming part of the role of the Byzantine emperor, whose capital he had conquered, and whose shoes he now sought to fill”¹⁶⁸. This is exactly the *sinallilia*-based Church-State relations that only a Roman Christian Emperor, a Roman Christian Caesar could fulfil. In his self-assumed role as the head of the Roman Christian community Fatih Sultan Mehmed gave the Patriarch of Constantinople “a position he had never previously enjoyed. He was not only *primus inter pares* among Orthodox patriarchs; now they were obliged to answer to him”¹⁶⁹. By way of the newly elevated position given to the Patriarch of Constantinople, Fatih Sultan Mehmed assumed the role of the Roman Emperor as the symbolic head not only of the Roman Orthodox Christians within the Empire but also of the global Orthodox community in the whole of the *Ecumene*:

In one sense this was impossible. The interest of the emperor in the affairs of the Orthodox community that was recognised by the Mamluk sultan was in no way a function of his imperium, but rather as a titular overlord of a religious community. This role no Muslim could hope to fill. But Mehmed, while not a member of that confessional community, had, in a sense, made himself head of the Orthodox Church...¹⁷⁰.

And it is very important that Athanasios reciprocated in full: “We might not expect [the Orthodox community in Palestine] to look to a Muslim leader from the outside to fill this role, but that, it appears, is what Athanasios was doing”¹⁷¹. So, according to himself, he was not Fatih Sultan

¹⁶⁶ Hattox 2000, 109.

¹⁶⁷ Hattox 2000, 110.

¹⁶⁸ Hattox 2000, 110.

¹⁶⁹ Hattox 2000, 110-111.

¹⁷⁰ Hattox 2000, 115.

¹⁷¹ Hattox 2000, 115. The relatively unproblematic relations between the Ottomans and the Mamluks at the time of Athanasios’ visit and Fatih Sultan Mehmed’s policy towards the Mamluks in the immediate years after the visit show that his politico-

Mehmed but Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed; or, even further, Fatih Basileus ... Sultan Mehmed? What would ... might be? Forthcoming... With us is God.

The ecumenicity of Roman Orthodox Christianity would be further sealed during the first years of the reign of Sultan Beyazid II Veli (1481 – 1512 AD) by a Pan-Orthodox Synod in 1482-1483 AD that condemned the 1439 uniate Council of Florence¹⁷². We may conclude not only that Patriarch Athanasios' visit reinforces the claimed personal affiliation of Fatih Sultan Mehmed to Roman Christianity (alongside his Roman Muslimness, a religious stance not uncommon, for example, among Bektashis), but also that, as far as the Roman Christian *millet* was concerned, the classical Roman *sinallilia*-based state-religion relations became the relevant Ottoman archetype too. Most importantly, it was the Roman Caesar and Sultan, Fatih Sultan Mehmed, who reconfirmed the ecumenical character of the Patriarchate of the New Rome, Constantinople, once and for all. This also shows that as long as all the relevant actors remain within the Roman Christian-Islamic 'unity of being' and *sinallilia*, neither can the Patriarchate of Constantinople turn into a state-like Vatican nor can the state turn into a mere religion-controlling institution (anti-religious or secular in the western sense).

As we will see in detail in the Chapter 3, the classical Roman *sinallilia*-based state-religion relations became the archetype for the Muslim *millet* as well. As Repp states, in that period a religious learned hierarchy (the *ilmiyye*) had just begun to become recognisable, but it had no administrative functions, and it had no involvement in state (political) affairs³⁶¹. It was during Fatih Sultan Mehmed's reign, in which the influence of the former Orthodox Christian *devşirme* reached its peak, that, as Akgündüz argues, the title of *Şeyhülislâm* gradually began to refer to the head of the *ulema*, who was undertaking the issuing of *fetvas* at the geographical centre of the sultanate¹⁷³. This formative process of centralisation and bureaucratisation that would position the *Şeyhülislâm* at the head of the Ottoman *ilmiyye* would terminate in the Ottoman classical period in the reign of Süleyman Kanuni (1520-1566 AD).

religious stance towards Roman Christianity of Palestine cannot be explained by a purely instrumental political logic on his part. Hattox is right when he states that "we may assume that Mehmed was not trying to appeal to the Greek Christians of Palestine as a source of future support" (Hattox 2000, 117).

¹⁷² Paizi-Apostolopoulou 2006, 96-97.

¹⁷³ Akgündüz 2002, 42.

Conclusions

In our view, the formation of the Christiano-Islamic Roman milieu follows very much the famous dictum of Junayd al-Bagdadi (830-910 AD):

the water takes the colour of the cup

, the water referring to the invisible ‘spirit’ (‘ideology’) and the cup to the ‘body’ (‘social conditions’). At the same time the cup-related metaphor refers to the Romanity of the whole *Ecumene*. At least two epigrams referring to Emperor Manuel I Comnenos’ (1143-1180 AD) victory over the Seljuk Sultan of Ikonion compare the Emperor’s golden drinking vessel with his “ability to measure the breadth of the oceans with the palm of his hands” and describe his depiction on it in the following manner:

Manuel, Emperor of New Rome, who is himself like gold both in mind and body. What the entire orb of the earth is insufficient (to contain) has been delineated around the vessel...¹⁷⁴.

The commensurability between Roman Christianity and Roman Islam as differentiated paths to the same Human and the Divine under the same politico-social conditions is not to be found necessarily in direct historical influences, but also in the fact that they both answer the same theophilosophical questions relating to the stagnation of late ancient Greek philosophy vis-à-vis its inability to address two key existential issues that it had itself put forward: a fundamental belief in the Oneness of Being and the unity of all existents within it, and also, a quest for a way of participation of the human being fully and in his/her totality - which it saw as fundamentally expressed by his/her soul - in that universal One Being¹⁷⁵. Yet without God’s Providence no such things would have been even imaginable, let alone real. Of course, the former constitutes the fullness of the Divine Will in His satisfactory approval (*εὐδοκία/eudokia*) in this fallen world in the fullness of the fully revealed Theanthropic God-*Logos* Jesus Christ, while the later, only in Will of the divine *oikonomia* (*οἰκονομία*) for the sake of the former as well as for the sake of Islam within the *Logos* as if within the Old Testament ontological environment – and this conditionally.

As we have seen, the Roman Christian (‘Byzantine’/‘Greek’)-Roman Islamic (Ottoman/‘Turkish’) inter-encapsulation was multidimensional,

¹⁷⁴ Papamastorakis 2001, 93.

¹⁷⁵ Loudovikos 2006, 209-10

taking place both at the elite and at the popular level – although such dichotomisation has hardly any validity for the Ottoman society of the time. In Ottoman Anatolia and Rumelia two identities predominated, one Islamic and one Orthodox Christian, both equally Roman. Pure Inner Asian identity elements are difficult to find as crucial determinants of ‘Ottoman-ness’. Gradually from the rise of the Roman Seljuks and later the Ottomans, a new identity came about, Islamic but Roman, which Kafadar calls neo-*Rumi*¹⁷⁶. It is most interesting that “the Chinese chronicles refer to the Roman Turks of Asia Minor, [those] with Ikonion [Konya] as their capital, as *Lumei*, and later the Ottomans as *Lumi*. [Bearing in mind that the Chinese pronounce the letter ‘r’ as ‘l’,] *Lumei* = *Ρωμαίοι* [Romei (Romans)] and *Lumi* = *Ρουμί*, *Ρωμιοί* [*Rumi/Romii* (Romans)]”¹⁷⁷. Or else, as the Japanese scholar, Hirotake Maeda reassures us about the Ottoman identity:

The Ottomans (or Romans – *Rumiyān*, as they are called in the Persian-language sources)¹⁷⁸.

As Shukurov insightfully commends:

I posed the problem of how did the Turkmens, finding themselves between the Arabo-Iranian and Byzantine worlds, between Christian and Muslim cultural spaces, identify themselves in the alien ambience¹⁷⁹.

Yet, at the same time, the Roman Empire and Central Asia were not as aliens to each other as Western epistemology likes them to be. Indeed, the ground-breaking work of Ying Lin of the Sun Yat-Sen University (Guangzhou) has revealed deep religio-politico-economic connections among Romans (Constantinople), Inner Asia Turkish and other nomadic people (Sogdians, etc), and the Chinese, at least from the 6th and 7th centuries AD¹⁸⁰. Not to say anything in relation to Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic Kingdoms of Central Asia, and even further back, to the religious contacts of Pythagoras with the Hyperboreans – the thirsty connection that Peter Kingsley so vividly portrays in his book, *A Story Waiting to Pierce You: Mongolia, Tibet, and the Destiny of the Western World*. Moreover, the latest also unique work of Dimitris Kitsikis’ *Comparative History of Greece and China: From Ancient Times to Today* (2007) (in Greek) moves towards

¹⁷⁶ Kafadar 1995, 28.

¹⁷⁷ Kitsikis 2007, 171-2.

¹⁷⁸ Maeda 2019, 126.

¹⁷⁹ Shukurov 2004, 764.

¹⁸⁰ See for example, Lin (2003).

this direction revealing a very complex historical trajectory among ancient Hellenes-Romans, Turks and Chinese lasting for thousands of years, with special emphasis in the history of thought.

As İnalçık states (referring to Balivet's pioneering work):

the term Rûm (Roman) which the Ottomans absorbed was not only a geographical one, but, in a 'puzzling manner', it expresses a true human and cultural fusion¹⁸¹.

The question remains as to what 'fusion', 'mixture', and the likes pertain regarding the Anatolian Roman realities. Compared with the monotonous and indeed highly defective (in terms of fullness) concept of tolerance (indeed, a key instrument for global intellectual Frankishisation in modernity), Shukurov's insight on a notion of a 'dual identity' advances our understanding to an entirely new level towards Romanity:

Claude Cahen repeatedly emphasised the religious tolerance of the Anatolian Seljuks, exceptional for the Muslim world. I would prefer to interpret the place of Christianity and the Greek language in the Seljuk identity in a different way. ... Dual identity supposes that one of the two identities is in active mode while the other is in deferred mode. ... Such a paradigm has little to do with religious and cultural tolerance in the proper sense because tolerance means an ability to tolerate others, while the sultans bore both religions and both cultures in their selves. Of course, such a paradigm is completely different from religious or cultural syncretism, which means the combining of the elements of differing worlds. Differing beliefs, languages and modes of life seemingly were present unmixed in the mentality of such persons. Depending on the circumstances, one of the two parts of their dual self was activated while the other receded into deferred status¹⁸².

Yet, this attempt remains unfulfilled for even in the case of dual identity the possibility of it being centred upon instrumental reason in/as the preeminent mode of being cannot be excluded – while in the opposite case, we get ontological schizophrenia. Yet the Graeco-Turkish case fits neither category. For once, there has never been a Roman (Greek or Turkish) religio-philosophical scheme that is characteristically based on a fully instrumentalised mode of reason (something that it would be emerged only in the rationalist Frankish West during the Enlightenment). Yet there is a deeper phenomenon at work here, one connected to the notion of (in)commensurability. As MacIntyre writes on the subject,

¹⁸¹ Özbaran, 2004, 123.

¹⁸² Shukurov 2012, 135.

genuine incommensurability can only be recognised and characterized by someone who inhibits both alternative conceptual schemes.... Such a person does not need to perform the task of translation in order to understand. Rather it is on the basis of his or her understanding of both conceptual idioms that the respects in which untranslatability presents barriers around or over which no way can be discovered can be acknowledged. Such persons are rarely numerous. They are inhabitants of boundary situations, generally incurring the suspicion and misunderstanding of members of both of the contenting parties¹⁸³.

And it is by the same token that commensurability is recognised. The mediator's movement is somewhat from the law of opposites, 'either ... or' to its overarching and all-inclusive Roman law of correlation, 'both ... and ...'. If it had remained at that level, then one might have gotten a merely relativistic construct. but there is a further movement within the law of correlation, the one from 'both ... and ...' to 'neither ... nor...': uncorrelated correlation. This non-conceptual and non-emotional ineffable-love-based movement is what transcends the notions of philosophical 'commensurability – incommensurability' in themselves and integrates the standpoints into a differentiated hierarchy with the highest one is able to full envelop the other by healing without annihilation. It orders the standpoints in, through and by the whole being (Ineffable Love/Noetic Heart, Reason/Intellect, Power/Body) of the mediator as the differentiated hierarchical order reflection of the ecumenical Perfect Human Being (*Τέλειος Ανθρωπος*, *İnsan-ı Kâmil*), the image of the one and only true ontological natural image of God as such, the Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, the fulfilment of this 'dual' identity comes only from and is comprehensible only within the Reality of the general theophilosophical commensurability between Roman Orthodox Christianity and Roman Ottoman *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* based on the existential principle of inter-encapsulation centring upon uncreated Love. As such the dual identity model becomes, a tripartite 'model' centred on the central Roman Christian reality of Theanthropic Differentiated Unity: *Two-Identities, One Being*. Or, in other words, a Dualistic Monism that is fed from uncreated divine *Supraness*. Note also that, in the case of Roman Orthodox Christians and Muslims, those inhabitants of boundary situations were not suspect but revered by both communities (Rumi, Petros Peloponnesios Lampadarios (c. 1735–1778 AD), etc.). Without ontologically incorporating the ontological religious dimension in the study of the Roman Christian and Ottoman Empire, it is as if you attempt to fly a supersonic airplane with its one wing tied to the

¹⁸³ MacIntyre 1990, 114.

ground - something that the otherwise noble approach on Roman (‘Byzantine’) history by Anthony Kaldelis suffers from.

The conquest of Constantinople constituted a turning point on Ottoman ecumenical state-building. It was in the reign of Fatih Sultan Mehmed that direct Byzantine influence reached its peak. The rise to power of the most Roman and Romanised elements in the Ottoman polity related to the ostracisation of the most centrifugal political-military elements, the *gazis*, who had indeed generally been ‘Romanised’ through *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf*, but were too autonomy- oriented to accept the Roman tradition of a centralised state – a tradition absent from the Turkic Inner Asian political culture. “[T]he conquest ... and the making of that city into the capital, the seat of power, constitute the crucial moment ... because they represent the crystallization of a *political vision* that marginalizes the *gazis*”¹⁸⁴. After Sultan Bayezid II, “the ascendancy of the *kul*-based administration was sealed, and the *gazis* never again played as significant a role in guiding the Ottoman polity”¹⁸⁵. The *gazis* “represent a specific segment of the medieval Anatolian frontier society with their own customs and lore, interests and alliances, within a coalition that had so much success that it eventually devoured some of its own members”¹⁸⁶. This coalition included, among others, pastoralist tribes and ‘heterodox’ dervishes related to them¹⁸⁷. In 1453, not only the *gazis* but also prominent Ottoman families, represented in the person of Çandarlı Halil Paşa and opposing the conquest of Constantinople, were permanently defeated by the pro-conquest former Roman Christian elements, Zağanos Paşa and the Bektashi *Yeniçeri*¹⁸⁸.

Ahmet Yaşar Ocak aptly states that

in the 12th century, when they became settled in Anatolia, the Turks united more together their pre-existing Asiatic Muslim identity with that of the Middle East. [In turn,] this [mixed Muslim] identity assumed a completely new character with the conquest of Istanbul in the 15th century. Represented in the strong personality of Fatih Sultan Mehmed, the Ottoman Empire became in a sense ‘a Muslim Byzantium’¹⁸⁹.

If we would like to be more precise, what Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed’s Empire established was *the Christian-Muslim Empire of Ecumenical Romanity* that its sole purpose was to bring back Frankish

¹⁸⁴ Kafadar 1995, 148, emphasis added.

¹⁸⁵ Kafadar 1995, 148.

¹⁸⁶ Kafadar 1995, 150.

¹⁸⁷ Kafadar 1995, 150.

¹⁸⁸ Kitsikis 2007, 165.

¹⁸⁹ Ocak 1995, 122.

Western Europe and the Arab Muslim East to the Roman Orthodox Christian and the Roman Islamic fold; the ‘Muslim Byzantium’ fits gradually more the era that followed Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed’s sudden death – or better, assassination (see Venice, his Jewish doctor, Maestro Iacobo, and Fatih’s elder son) – while on campaign to realise the above plan and the ludicrous assumption of the Sultanate by his older son, Bayezid II Veli instead of Cem Sultan, Fatih’s true choice.

Closing, it is none less than the former Director of the Ottoman Top Kapı Palace, İlber Ortaylı who not only accepts the organic continuity among Rome, ‘Byzantium’ and the Ottoman Empire but also the Romanity of the later as well: the Ottomans as the Third and Final Rome¹⁹⁰. A most welcomed addition to this understanding is İsmail Tokalak’s, *Bizans - Osmanlı Sentezi: Bizans Kültür ve Kurumlarının Osmanlı Üzerindeki Etkisi*¹⁹¹. In turn and despite her highly deformed understanding of the overall religious aspects of ‘Byzantine’ reality, Arveler states:

So, the Inheritance which an exhausted Constantinople left intact to its new masters (and which itself had inherited from ancient Rome) was Ecumenicity, irrespective, anymore, of the person of the Emperor, of his ethnicity or of his religion¹⁹².

In the words of Shukurov,

the Turkmens were eager to be true “Romans”, and, consequently, in some sense, to enter the “Roman” Commonwealth. However, in most cases it was not the matter of real political, military, economic, etc. dependence upon the Byzantine emperor, but rather of *the adoption of the ideological heritage of the Universal Empire*¹⁹³.

But one needs to remember that the Ecumenicity of the Roman Ottoman Empire took place – as it did Greek and Turkish secularism in modernity – because and not despite or irrespectively of its two defining religions, the Christianity and Islam of Romanity.

¹⁹⁰ Ortaylı, İlber. “Osmancılık Üçüncü ve Son Roma’dır [Ottomanity is the Third and the Last Rome].” *Milliyet*, June 6, 2010 [<http://www.milliyet.com.tr/osmanlilik-ucuncu-ve-son-roma-dir/ilber-ortayli/pazar/yazardetay/06.06.2010/1247139/default.htm>], accessed June 22, 2013. See his specially highlighted reference to our work, on the Roman ‘Byzantine-Ottoman Continuum’, in his authorised biography (Uysal 2006, 316).

¹⁹¹ (*The Byzantine – Ottoman Synthesis: The Effect of Byzantine Culture and Institutions on the Ottomans*), İstanbul 2010.

¹⁹² Arveler[-Glykatzi] 2009, 253.

¹⁹³ Shukurov 2004, 762, emphasis added.

CHAPTER 3

ROMAN CLASSICAL OTTOMAN SINALLILIA: FROM THE 16TH TO THE MID-18TH CENTURY

By merely changing their name and their religion,
the Byzantine Romans (Greeks) and other Balkan nations emerged in a
new stage of history as a new race and nation
[i.e., as the Ottomans] which have taken on new duties.
They revived and continued the old Byzantium in the Ottomans.
—Prof. Ömer Lütfü Barkan¹

When the Ottomans conquered Byzantium
, or else, the Eastern Roman Empire,
they found in the Balkans of the period
a system of Eastern and Byzantine origin
which they continued without a change.
—Prof. Halil İnalcık²

I heard from trusted sources that [the Sultan Suleyman I Kanuni]
repeatedly stated that he has the sole right over the Roman Empire and the
whole West as the legal inheritor of Constantine [I the Great].
—Paolo Giovio, *Commentario de le cose de' Turchi* (1532 AD)³

While up to the period of Fatih Sultan Mehmed, the Alevi-Sunni
differentiation did not create any problems, “right at the end of the 15th
century and the beginning of the 16th century a dramatic change occurred in
this situation”⁴. Indeed, as we will see, the differentiation became a
politically derived opposition, due to political developments and problems
which conspicuously emerged by the end of the 15th/early 16th century.
Interestingly, it began during the reign of the formerly opium-user, Sultan

¹ In Tokalak 2010 (back cover).

² Ibid.

³ Özbaran 2004, 122, quoting from the Turkish translation of Fleischer 1986.

⁴ Çamuroğlu 2000, 29.

Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512 AD) who, as we will show elsewhere⁵, was most likely involved in the assassination of his father, Fatih Sultan Mehmed in cahoots with the Venetians by way of their agent and personal Jewish physician of the late Sultan, Maestro Jacobo. The destruction of the (re-)institution of Ecumenical Romanity at a global level with the bicephalous campaign of Fatih Sultan Mehmed towards Jerusalem and Rome in 1481 AD lay squarely on the hands of Sultan Bayezid II, who had come to become Sultan against the wishes of his father. It is not accidental that Sultan Bayezid II's policies stopped the two-pronged military campaign of Fatih Sultan Mehmed in its track – and thus, prevented the destruction of Venice itself –, favoured the migration of Jews (massive exodus of Sephardic Talmudic Jews into the Roman Ottoman Empire who were being massacred by the Spanish Franks) and held a peculiarly preferential treatment for Maestro Jacobo and his descendants. Above, the as-far-as-possible equal treatment between Christianity, i.e., Roman Orthodoxy and Islam (Roman Ottoman/Turkish Islam) that lay at the core of the Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed's personal and Imperial Vision which precipitated even, most likely, his conversion to Orthodox Christianity was lost. We should not forget here that Prince Bayezid had accused his father, Fatih Sultan Mehmed of “not believing in Muhammad”⁶. The anti-Roman, i.e., anti-Ottoman Frankish Western camp hailed these developments beyond measure. In his *History of Italy* (1537-1540 Ad), Francesco Guicciardini reserves full praise for Sultan Bayezid II (1481-1512 AD) for both his mild ways towards war as well as for parochializing his religious interests only within Islam, i.e., what served the Frankish interest of the time. Note here *how the Franks trembled in front of the Roman Ottoman Christian-Islamic Vision of Basileus Fatih Sultan Mehmed and his love for Christianity, i.e., Orthodoxy*.

Thus, the destruction of the (re-)institution of Ecumenical Romanity at a global level began when the Roman Ecumenical Islamic-Christian vision of the greatest Basileus Emperor-Sultan was mutilated. These developments had an internal and an external face – both interrelated. The former face related to state bureaucratization, and the conflict between the former Roman Christian *devşirme kapıkulları* – especially the Bektāşi *Yeniçeris* – and the Turcoman-related elements (*gazis*) (mostly Alevi/Bektāşi), which led to the gradual expulsion of the latter from the political structures of the Ottoman state. All these were internal developments subsequent to the conquest of Constantinople, which were becoming gradually conspicuous from the period of Sultan Fatih Mehmet's reign. The latter face was

⁵ Retoulas, Christos. *Engenderings of Ecumenical Romanity: The Christian-Islamic Vision of Basileus Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror*, forthcoming.

⁶ Raby 1982, 8.

externally expressed in the Roman Ottoman – Persian Safavid conflict in the early 16th century. It was at that time that the Ottoman state became concerned with issues of Sunni ‘orthodoxy’⁷. It is not accidental that the delegation Roman Christianity to a secondary – at least on paper - yet still constitutive element of the Ottoman polity was coupled by the conferring of a rather similar ‘status’ to the Anatolian Alevi communities.

Ottoman ‘Sunnism’

Mirmiroglou describes the ceremony of Beyazid II (r. 148–1512 AD) joining the *Bektaşîyye* in the presence of the second patron of the *Bektaşîyye*, Balım Sultan, with the *Yeniçeris* calling the former “Emperor of the External World” and the latter “Emperor of the Internal World”⁸, each with their own well-defined spheres of jurisdiction, worldly and religious respectively. He was also a disciple of the important Halveti *Şeyh*, *Çelebi Halife* (d. 1494 AD), and the Bayrami *Şeyh*, Muhyiddin Yavsî (d. 1514 AD)⁹. Interestingly, Beyazid II seems also to have felt close to Orthodox Christianity: “Having become the master (conqueror) of Methoni [a town in the southeast of the Peloponnese], Beyazid wished on 10th August 1500 to give thanks to God for his victory in a Christian temple”¹⁰. On another point, Kafadar also says that after the harsh centralism of his father, Fatih Sultan Mehmed, Beyazid was hoping to “tame cults [*sic.*] that had not yet become fully anti-Ottoman”¹¹ - e.g., the *kızılbaş*. Yet he indeed took some “precautionary measures” in order to neutralise the emerging threat, such as the forceful transfer (*sürgün*) of about thirty thousand of “his extreme Shii [*sic.*] subjects [i.e., *kızılbaş*] from Anatolia to the newly conquered European domains in the Morea [Peloponnese]...”¹².

Although the Ottoman Christian Romanity would not develop on an equal footing with its Islamic counterpart anymore, Roman Ottoman *tasavvufi* Islam would follow a golden expansion and legitimisation even within the Arab lands. Indeed, in their article, *Books on Sufism, Lives of Saints, Ethics, and Sermons*, which examines the library of Sultan Bayezid II, Cemal Kafadar and Ahmet Karamustafa write:

⁷ Kafadar 1995, 73.

⁸ Mirmiroglou 1940, 150-162.

⁹ Öngören 2000b., 246.

¹⁰ Sathas 1869, 63.

¹¹ Kafadar 1995, 97.

¹² Allouche 1983, 85.

The section on Sufism - with lives of saints, ethics, and homiletics also nested in it - constitutes the largest single classification in the palace library inventory, without even considering several dozen relevant works listed in other sections of the inventory by Bayezid II's librarian 'Atufi. Among the twenty sections (*tafsîls*) or fields of learning that constitute the grid in which 'Atufi struggles to situate each and every volume in its appropriate discipline, Sufism takes pride of place in terms of numbers. The 1,084 titles in this section account for fifteen percent of the more than 7,200 works listed in the inventory as a whole¹³.

And they continue:

By 1502–4, in other words, Sufism had arrived, at least in the lands of Rum and arguably also in many corners of the broader geography of muslim communities in the afro-Eurasian oikoumene. the prominence of sufism in the inventory is not simply a matter of numbers. For 'Atufi, or for Bayezid, who was presumably the prime audience for this text, there was obviously a touch of affection worth expressing toward certain authors in this otherwise dry list of titles, names, and subjects. of the standard phrases of fond remembrance and wishes used for the deceased, “may his tomb be radiant” (*tāba tharāhu*) occurs regularly for members of the ottoman imperial family and otherwise only fifty-two times in the whole text, thirty-nine of which (namely, three-quarters) appear in the Sufism section. The two names that dominate this section, Imam al-Ghazali (d. 1111) and Ibn al-'Arabi (d. 1240), receive the highest number of invocations with that phrase, eleven and eight times respectively¹⁴.

It is most importance to see that what were otherwise seen as part of philosophical inquiry, namely, morals/ethics, in the Roman Ottoman milieu was seen as part of *tasavvuf*:

the inclusion of books on ethics (*akhlaq*) in this section of the inventory, and the treatment of ethics as a subcategory of Sufism, only enhances this sense of the expanding capaciousness of Sufism. In other words, 'Atufi was informed by the late-fifteenth-century attitude toward as a vast body of and conduit for *taṣawwuf* knowledge¹⁵.

It must be remembered that this pitiful pity of a Sultan sold all the Christian relics that his father, Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed kept and honoured beyond measure to the impious Frankish Papists. Sultan Bayezid II was poisoned by his son, Yavuz Sultan Selim.

¹³ Kafadar and Karamustafa 2019, 439.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

In the latter half of the fifteenth century, the Ottoman eastern Anatolian provinces were in a fluid state, with several Muslim and Christian princes still maintaining their independence. The son of Şeyh Haydar (son of Şeyh Joneyd (d. 1460) and Khadija Begum bt. Qara Othman) and Martha (later Halima Begum Agha)¹⁶ (the daughter of the leader of the *Akkoyunlu* dynasty, Emir Uzun Hasan ibn ‘Alī Abu ‘l-Nasr (c. 1425-1478)¹⁷ and Theodora Megale Comnena/Despina Hatun (daughter of John IV Megas Comnenus (r. 1429-1458/60 AD), Theodora (or Ekaterina) (1438-(between 1478-1502))¹⁸))¹⁹, Shah Ismail/ Esmā‘il (1487-1524)²⁰ was the founder of the Safavid dynasty which was named after his famous forefather, *Şeyh Safiyüddin* (1252-1335 AD) known as *Pir-i Tork*, and which very rapidly developed into the Iranian Twelver Shii theocracy. The timing coincides with the introduction of the 12 Imam concept to the Bektashis by Balım Sultan, also the son probably of a Bulgarian, Orthodox Christian mother, from whom he received a Christian upbringing²¹. Other common Alevi themes seem to be the parallelism of Ali/Jesus, 12 Imams/Twelve Apostles and Hasan-Hüseyn/Peter-Paul²². The centrality of Ali in the *Bektaşî*/Alevi belief essentially dates from that period. “Even if we cannot identify an exact date for the *Safaviyya* order’s emergence as a militant Shi‘i political entity, Joneyd’s reign marks a crucial milestone as the sociopolitical dynamics of the era enabled him to accelerate the Shi‘itization and

¹⁶ By way of that marriage, Martha/Halima became an ancestor of the later Moghul emperors of India.

¹⁷ Foundation for Medieval Genealogy, 1426-Tabris 5 Jan 1478, bur Tabriz, Nasriye Mosque in <http://fmg.ac/Projects/MedLands/TREBIZOND.htm#Toc2215> 81556. Accessed May 12, 2023.

¹⁸ Savvides and Nicoloudis 2007, 438. Savory states that she was the daughter of David Megas Comnenos (Savory 2007, 18). Despina Hatun had come to Diyarbakir with all her Christian entourage and kept her Christian faith. Her grave was located in the garden of the Church of Saint George (Aya Yorgi) in Diyarbakir (Ekinci 2002, 91).

¹⁹ The timing coincides with the introduction of the 12 Imam concept to the Bektashis by Balım Sultan, also the son probably of a Bulgarian, Orthodox Christian mother, from whom he received a Christian upbringing [Mirmiroglou 1940, 149]. Other common Alevi themes seem to be the parallelism of Ali/Jesus, 12 Imams/Twelve Apostles and Hasan-Hüseyn/Peter-Paul (Mirmiroglou 1940, 121). The centrality of Ali in the *Bektaşî*/Alevi belief essentially dates from that period.

²⁰ For a brief biography of Shah Ismail, as well as an extensive bibliography, see Onarlı 2000.

²¹ Mirmiroglou 1940, 149.

²² Mirmiroglou 1940, 121.

politicization of the order”²³. According to the anti-Safavid, Sunni jurist and historian Khonji (d. 1519),

the Anatolian followers of the *tariqa* were extremely devoted to the leaders of the order to the extent that they abandoned their religious duties, such as fasting and daily prayer, and believed that Joneyd was God and Heydar, his son, was the son of God... ‘The fools of Rum’, Khonji claims, gathered around Joneyd to spread ‘*their own trinity*’ [composed of God, Mohammad and ‘Ali] as a crown of ‘devilish imagination’²⁴.

It is most interesting concerning the nature of Iranian ‘mysticism’ than in such a comprehensive study on the Safavids like that 740-page volume, *The Safavid World*, edited by Rudi Matthee (2022) which includes many articles on Sufism, neither the name of Ibn Arabi occurs in the main texts, nor that of the supposedly ‘Persian’ Rumi (except once and that incidentally) nor we find the term, *vahdet-i vücud* in any form.

Shah Ismail had close relations with and was respectful towards the Ottoman Sultan Bayezid II, whom he addressed as ‘father’ (‘*baba*’). His writings and poetry, most of them in common Turkish, were widely available and loved by Istanbul’s population²⁵. According to Mirmiroglou, most of the population of Konstantiniyye were Bektashi at that time²⁶. According to 16th-century Ottoman state documents, the majority of the population of the Roman Anatolia province were *kızılbaş*²⁷. “While assigning a number to the size of those involved is impossible, according to the estimate given in a Venetian embassy report from 1514, about four-fifths of the Anatolian population had Shi‘i-‘Alid [*sic.*, i.e., *Kızılbaş/Alevi*] leanings”²⁸. Marcantonio Barbaro who wrote in 1573 similarly states most of the Anatolian Muslims belonged secretly to the Bektashi/‘*kızılbaş*’ (Alevi) sect²⁹. Shah Ismail was also much respected and revered in the Anatolian countryside among large parts of Turcoman populations, who played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Safavid state. “The presence of the belief in the Unity of Being (*Varlık Birliği* [*vahdet-i vücud*]) is intense in his poetry. We learn from written sources how much the Anatolian communities that are referred to as *Kızılbaş* – Alevi – Bektashi loved him,

²³ Baltacıoğlu-Brammer 2022, 23.

²⁴ Baltacıoğlu-Brammer 2022, 25-26, emphasis ours.

²⁵ Mirmiroglou 1940, 203.

²⁶ Mirmiroglou 1940, 203.

²⁷ Şavaş 1992, 21.

²⁸ Karakaya-Stump 2020, 295.

²⁹ Crowfoot 1900, 311.

and that they recited his verses in common Turkish in their gatherings and their ceremonies”³⁰.

The developing conflict, which was first witnessed during Bayezid II’s reign, during which the first limited anti-*kızılbaş* pogroms took place, developed in full between Bayezid’s son, Sultan Selim I (Yavuz) (r. 1512-1520 AD) and Shah Ismail. In the exchange of letters between Selim I and Shah Ismail, the Ottoman styled himself as the like of the Greek Alexander the Great, while he designated his opponent Ismail as the Persian Darius, who would be utterly defeated³¹. The conflict manifested itself as a religious confrontation between the ‘Sunni’ and *kızılbaş* segments of the Ottoman population and was based on political, not essentially philosophical, foundations. Shah Ismail presented himself as the Mehdi (Messiah). Yet, as Karakaya-Stump argues, neither “the Anatolian Kizilbash were docile extensions of the Safavids” nor did the Safavids introduce “messianic ideas and expectations where there were none before”; they simply provided “a powerful unifying locus for them”³².

A series of revolts took place, and under the slogan ‘Let us go to the Shah’, the nomadic Turcoman populations began to move in great numbers towards Persia from different parts of Anatolia, even from the Aegean and the Mediterranean, depleting the population under the Ottoman state: “The population balance in the Ottoman lands that would come to be characterized as Sunni-Alevi was quickly destroyed. The political alternative that manifested itself as having a religious appearance would compel the Ottoman state to move towards fundamental religious changes”³³. As far as the revolts were concerned, although the numbers of deaths perpetrated by either the Ottoman or the pro-Persian *kızılbaş* involved in the conflict are considered by some scholars to be an exaggeration, Selim I is said to have put to the sword about forty thousand heterodox *babais* and many more nomads and peasants³⁴. On the other hand, the rebels were similarly violent. In just one of these rebellions, known as the *Şahkulu* rebellion (1511 AD), the rebels devastated Asia Minor and left behind fifty thousand dead³⁵. These political events were reflected in the state’s orientation towards religious matters.

³⁰ Eyuboğlu 2000, 294.

³¹ Mirmiroglou 1940, 215. Of course, this is within the Ottoman self-identity tradition of Aḥmedî’s *İskender-nâme*.

³² Karakaya-Stump 2022, 40.

³³ Çamuroğlu 1996, 134-5.

³⁴ Mirmiroglou 1940, 83, quoting Atalay, Besim 1923, *Bektaşî Edebiyatı (Bektashi Literature)*, İstanbul, 27.

³⁵ Tekindağ 1968, 51.

This historical period marks a turning point in state religious policy and religious characterization. It inaugurates a period of ‘Sunni-sation’ of the Ottoman state. The previous ‘metadoxical’ pattern is seriously but not totally disrupted in the time of Yavuz Selim, as a direct result of the attempt of the Ottoman centre to defend its territories against the Safavids using Sunni-based beliefs. Safavid propaganda was both oral and written, and, as we shall see, was based on Râfîzî religious beliefs, which were widespread among the Turcoman *kızılbaş*. To the degree that they denoted the positions of the Turcoman Anatolian elements, in the 16th-century terminology the terms *kızılbaş*, Râfîzî, and Safevî were used almost interchangeably by the Ottoman state³⁶. One of the central themes of the Safavid propaganda was that Shah Ismail was himself *kızılbaş* and that whoever raised his sword against him could not be considered Muslim³⁷. In opposing this type of religious-political claim, which in fact constitutes Safavid definitions of what is really Muslim, the Ottoman state began to generate its own notions of ‘atheism’ and ‘heresy’. The Ottomans had found a way to legitimize the killing, prohibited by the *şeriat*, of fellow Muslims whom they had until recently considered proper Muslims. “The Ottoman central administration, which up to that time had not practised any kind of oppressive policy against the heterodox section [of the population], began to apply a policy of very strict control. The state began officially and frequently to pronounce the ideology of protection of Sunni Muslims (*Ehl-i Sünnet*) against the heterodox section, which it characterized in the documents it issued with terms such as *zındık* [atheist], *mülhid* [atheist, heretic], *ehl-i rafz* or *rafizi* [apostates]. The reason for [it] taking this radical attitude against the heterodox section, unprecedented in the period before the 16th century, more than being a theological conflict, was political, i.e., it was oriented towards the aim of protecting itself and [Ottoman] territories against the Safavid propaganda”³⁸.

The Sunnisation process was further accentuated by and reflected a change in the actual Sunni-‘heterodox’ population balance in favour of the former, owing to the migration and persecution of the ‘heterodox’ Turcoman elements and, later on, the incorporation of the Arab lands into the Empire. The whole process would seem to have been sealed by the assumption of the title of Caliph, ‘the Shadow of God on Earth’, by Selim I. However, the issue of the assumption of the title of Caliph by Selim I and,

³⁶ Ekinci 2002, 204. Ekinci’s book vividly highlights, among other things, the deep religious differences between 16th-century *Anatolian kızılbaş-ism/Alevism* and *Iranian Shiism*.

³⁷ Savaş 1992, 22.

³⁸ Ocak 1999, 42.

in general, its systematic usage by the Ottomans before the later part of the 18th century has remained very problematic. None of the contemporary Ottoman accounts mentions any transfer of the title of Caliph, or even the Abbasid Caliph of Cairo himself³⁹. Overall, it seems that for the Roman Ottomans, the Caliphate had only a marginal value. Irrespective of the historical reality of the transfer, the title of Caliph had by that time only a nominal value and simply conferred an air of religious legitimacy on the political authority of the Sultan to whom the Caliph was merely subservient⁴⁰. The marginal value that the Ottomans attached to the title would begin to change with the foreign intrusion into the Empire during the 18th century. The relevant Ottoman state personalities and authors of that late period seem to have been in contact with the discourses of earlier authors such as the historians, the Mamluk-Egyptian Ibn Iyâs (1448-1522 AD), Cenâbî (1540s-1590/91 AD), and Müneccimbaşı (1631-1702 AD), who mentioned an official transfer of the Abbasid Caliphate to the Ottomans⁴¹.

The Sunnisation process involved more state-related bureaucratisation of the *ulema*, giving the *ulema* a bigger influence in religion-related state affairs – leading to the expulsion of ‘heterodoxy’ from the *ulema*. As Mahmut Kaya notes, courses in the rational sciences became progressively entrapped in scholasticism⁴², even though the Aristotelian *kelam* continued to be taught in Ottoman medreses until their abolition in the 20th century⁴³. From that time onwards, the *kızılbaş* communities in Anatolia, deprived of

³⁹ Sümer 1992, 353. There is some evidence suggesting that the Ottomans seem to have marginally referred to the title of the Caliph in the 16th century in dealing with certain remote and politically unruly Arab-populated provinces, such as Morocco, for political purposes (see, for example, El Moudden 1995). Yet it did not constitute a central and identity-providing concept of Ottoman religiosity itself. It seems to be a central issue in Arabocentric sources and discourses rather than in those relating to the core Roman Ottoman domains.

⁴⁰ Kitsikis 1996, 185, and 1996b., 126.

⁴¹ The main historical work of Müneccimbaşı, entitled *Camii'd-Düvel*, which was written in Arabic and narrated the history of the world from Adam until 1673 AD, was translated into Ottoman Turkish as late as the beginning of the 18th century.

⁴² Professor Dr Mahmut Kaya in article by Muhsin Öztürk, titled “Düşünce’nin 600 Yılı” [The 600 Years of Thought] in the Islamist *Aksiyon*, Issue 219. The article covers the International Symposium on Ottoman science and thought that took place in February 1999 in Istanbul under the auspices of the Faculty of Theology of Marmara University, the Cerrahpaşa Faculty of Medicine of Istanbul University and the Goethe Institute.

⁴³ For a synopsis of the Ottoman and Safavid curricula, see Robinson 1997, 174-181.

state support and legitimacy, seem also to have begun to assume an inward-looking posture. This was the more so since the newly established Safavid state, after an extremely brief period of pro-*kızılbaş* policies, would rapidly marginalise and exterminate their political and religious influence. Most importantly and in stark contrast to the Ottoman case, even from the time of Shah Ismail, the Safavid Shahs would “remove all *tasavvuf* movements from state administration and social life”⁴⁴, first removing Sunni and later Shii *tarikats*⁴⁵. In his article, *The Role of Sufism in the Spread of Shiism during the Safavid Period: An Assessment from the Point of View of the History of Sufism* (in Turkish), Süleyman Gökbulut basically attest to a rather negative correlation between the Safavids of Twelver Shiism and the *tasavvufi tarikats*: “In fact, the Safavid attempt to intimidate both Shii and Sunni *tarikats* reveals that the issue is not temporary/contingent in nature but it based on fundamental perceptions. This means that there is no place for *tarikats*-type movements in the Shii [Safavid] worldview”⁴⁶.

Concerning Ottoman ‘Sunnisation’:

But just as important for the longer term was a deliberate and sustained policy of Sunnitisation, institutionalised during the unusually long reign of Kanuni Süleyman, spanning more than four decades. *A key point to recognise here is that the Kizilbash were not the only ones on the receiving end of these policies; they also affected those who were nominally Sunni Muslims...* The state was actively implementing the necessary measures to ensure compliance with Islamic ‘orthopraxy’ as envisioned by Ebussu‘ud, including forcing villagers to build mosques in their villages and sending ‘*namâzcıs*’, a kind of religious police, to those areas where the population insisted on disregarding obligatory daily prayers⁴⁷.

To what degree all these were enforced in practice or were widespread remains an open question with – most likely – a very negative answer. For as Vefa Erginbaş aptly tells us

Even though there is evidence suggesting changes in the Ottoman state’s religious policies to a more hawkish approach to the Shi’i groups such as the Qizilbash, who were seen as threatening the integrity of the state, *there is little evidence to suggest that this type of state Sunnism was transferred more broadly into Ottoman society*. The example of various historians and scholars discussed in this work displays the complex nature of Ottoman

⁴⁴ Uyar 1999, 131.

⁴⁵ Uyar 1999, 131.

⁴⁶ Gökbulut 2016.

⁴⁷ Karakaya-Stump 2020, 287-288, emphasis added.

Sunnism. Despite the growing Safavid influence in Anatolia and Iraq in the late sixteenth century and the state of open warfare between the Ottoman and Safavid empires, Ottoman intellectuals of the sixteenth century did not necessarily adopt a rigid Sunnism as a defence against a perceived Shi'i threat⁴⁸.

That is why Derin Terzioğlu wisely advises caution:

Whether we conceptualize Ottoman sunnitization as a state project, or (as I prefer) as a joint project of the religious and political authorities, we have to recognize that programs were one thing and implementation another⁴⁹.

In this line, as Güngörürler points out in the context of the Islamisation of the diplomatic relations between the Ottomans and Safavids between 1639 and 1720 AD, we witness a mutual hierarchical reproachment with the Safavids accepting the Ottoman claims of a greater caliphal authority within Islam and the Ottomans accepting the Islamic legitimacy of Twelver Shiism by distancing themselves from even innuendos of Safavid infidelity. The co-related issue of the Ottoman understanding of their own Caliphate is of interest concerning both the nature of the institution in itself as well as its future relation with Turkish secularism:

For its own part, in diplomatic correspondence with the Safavids, the Sublime Porte consistently made claims to the [greater] caliphate through sultanic titulature. However, it did not try to act upon the universal, extraterritorial dimension of this office (i.e., it did not attempt to revive the practice of issuing caliphal investiture diplomas for monarchs and princes whose territory of rule lay outside the Ottoman Empire)... Yet, the Sublime Porte did expect, and mostly receive, nominal recognition of the theoretical universality of the Ottoman sultan's divine mandate, because the caliphal dignity had blended into the imperial rank, where it lived on as a set of titles⁵⁰.

Isapostolic-like...

An interesting development that highlights the interconnection of Turkish popular 'heterodox' Islam with Roman Christianity was the fact that the Sunnisation process put Islamising pressures on the Anatolian non-Muslim communities. According to 16th-century Ottoman state documents, *zimmi*s constituted more than one-third of the overall Anatolian population

⁴⁸ Erginbaş 2017, 641.

⁴⁹ Terzioğlu 2012-2013, 322.

⁵⁰ Güngörürler 2020, 494.

in that century⁵¹. In the field of law, we see a formal legal decline in their social status which, at least in theory, one would expect in a Sunni country. It is interesting to note that it was about two and a half centuries after the establishment of the Ottoman state and a little less than a century after the conquest of Constantinople that such differentiations were sanctioned by the state, at least in a nominal fashion. For example, at some point, Yavuz Sultan Selim developed the idea of converting all Christians and churches to Islam and into mosques respectively. In the end, the idea did not materialize, since Patriarch Theoliptus I (p. 1514-1522 AD) and Grand Vizier Piri Mehmed Paşa put forward an argument against it based on the negative economic consequences this policy would have produced⁵². According to the Frankish British historian Steven Runciman,

In about 1520 Sultan Selim I, who disliked Christianity, suggested to his horrified vizier that all Christians should be forcibly converted to Islam. When he was told that this was impracticable, he demanded that at least all their churches should be surrendered. The vizier warned the Patriarch, Theoleptus I, who engaged the services of a clever lawyer called Xenakis. Theoleptus admitted that he had no *firman* protecting the churches. It had been burnt in a fire at the Patriarchate, he said. *But Xenakis was able to produce three aged Janissaries who had been present when the Conquering Sultan entered Constantinople. They swore on the Koran that they had seen a number of notables from the city come to the Sultan as he was waiting to make his entrance and offer him the keys of their respective districts. In return he promised them that they could retain their churches. Sultan Selim accepted this evidence and even allowed the Christians to reopen some of their churches which his officials had closed.* All the same, several more churches were annexed during his reign⁵³.

That is: Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed's *Yeniçeri* members of the *Bektasiyye* saved the Orthodox Churches. Yavuz Sultan Selim's membership in the *Bektasiyye*⁵⁴ must surely have played a role in accepting the former *Yeniçeris'* testimony. But more important, Runciman's accusation (without providing a source) on the alleged Selim I's disliking of Christianity is a typical Frankish anti-Ottoman stance. For according to an anonymous *Chronicon Breve* written most likely after 1523: "[Selim I] liked the

⁵¹ Savaş 1992, 24. In some towns, Christian households constituted the majority of the population. For example, that was the case in Sivas until at least the beginning of the 19th century.

⁵² Zeginis 1996, 161. See also, Kitsikis 1996, 187., and 1996b, 128.

⁵³ Runciman 1968, 189-190, emphasis added.

⁵⁴ See below.

Christians very much and particularly the Church of Christ [(the Roman Orthodox Patriarchate)]”⁵⁵. Interesting, Piri Mehmed Pasha, who helped the Sufis in their struggle against the Safavid *tarikât*, had an active interest in *tasavvuf* being him close to the *Mevleviyye* and the *Halvetiyye*⁵⁶.

Here though it needs to be remembered that in the upheaval of the Ottoman-Safavid conflict, even the position of Islamic *tasavvufi* leaders in general was somewhat precarious as “many Sufis risked getting caught up in the witch hunt for Safavid sympathizers that saw the imprisonment and even execution of a number of mystics”⁵⁷.

In 1537 Selim’s successor concerning Sultan Süleyman *Kanuni* took up the matter again, “asking for all Orthodox Churches of Istanbul to be confiscated, but the *Şeyhülislâm* [Sa’dî *Çelebi*] rescued the situation by delivering a negative ruling, based on the Hanefî tradition, stating that, while on the one hand, Constantinople had indeed resisted and fallen by the general assault [of the Ottoman forces], on the other, since the Conqueror had left the Greek Orthodox the disposal of their churches, this proved that the City had indeed surrendered! Consequently, it was not possible to convert the churches into mosques according to the *şeriat*, something which Süleyman accepted”⁵⁸. Once again Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed saved Roman Christianity and Romanity, this time not from the Franks, but from Islam!!! Although that date has been generally accepted, Hasan Çolak investigation on the issue furnishes us with modified results, i.e., that the whole incident “occurred during the first months of Çivizade’s tenure. Therefore, if the dating given by Ebussuud is true, the actual happening of the event must be between 21 February 1539, when Sadullah Sadi died and was replaced with Çivizade, and 18 May 1539 when the year 945 of the Hegira ends”⁵⁹. It is most interesting from the overall point of view, that although the initial thrust against the status of the Christian Churches came from the Sultanic authorities, it was during the time of the *Şeyhülislâm* Çivizâde Muhyiddîn Efendi (d. 1547 AD), also known for his negative pronouncements on Ibn Arabi and Celaleddin Rumi – that turned to be the main reason for his dismissal from that Office.

⁵⁵ Patrinelis 1969, 570-571. This is the more so considering that this *Chronicon Breve* seems to pertain to renewed Italian anxieties concerning Sultan Süleyman Kanuni’s military aims.

⁵⁶ Küçükdağ, Yusuf. “Piri Mehmed Paşa.” In *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. Accessed July 17, 2023. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/piri-mehmed-pasa>.

⁵⁷ Curry 2010, 118.

⁵⁸ Kitsikis 1996, 187, and 1996b., 128.

⁵⁹ Çolak 2008, 50-51.

We are not sure if this relates to the unfortunate state attempts to confiscate Christian ecclesiastical endowments (*vakıfs*) in 1568:

In 1568,... the Ottoman government, citing a number of fatwas by Ebū'ssu'ūd, had declared all Christian *waqfs* to be null and void. Subsequently, however, after some hard negotiation with the monastic authorities, and again with Ebū's-su'ūd's help, the government had softened its position. Christian *waqf*s would once again be allowed to function, but under the legal fiction that they were benefiting Christian communities rather than Christian places of worship (which the *şeyhü'l-islām* had earlier ruled to be impermissible). Following this revised formula, churches and monasteries would also be permitted to "buy back" their properties, albeit at considerable cost to these foundations... It was probably this fluctuating state of affairs that enabled ["the belle-lettrist and kadı"] 'Āşık [Çelebi (d. 1572 AD)] to present the sale of Christian *waqf*s as an "abuse" by individual officials rather than as concerted state action⁶⁰.

What is interesting for our overall discussion is the mentality of 'differentiated corelation' of Islamic and worldly law and tradition. As Eugenia Kermeli writes on Ebū's Su'ūd's solution to the problem of monastic property:

His task was difficult since, firstly, monastic *vakıfs* were not permitted in Islamic law and he would therefore have had to categorise them differently and secondly, this new categorisation would have to recognise the collective character of a monastic community. The solution he gave was both practical and legitimate. He categorised monastic *vakıfs* as family *vakıfs*, treating the monks of a monastery as the offspring of the deceased monks... Ebū's Su'ūd's legal fictions employed in the confiscation of monastic properties is proof of his willingness to treat the incident as an administrative issue and justifies his fame as the jurist who reconciled custom with Islamic legal theory⁶¹.

All in all,

The legal status of monastic property during the 15th and 16th the century is interwoven with the evolution of Islamic law, which is anything but static. Within the framework allowed by Islamic jurisprudence and the needs of Muslim society, the Ottoman jurists have created a flexible framework, which may seem chaotic to us who we today are accustomed to the regulatory legislation of modern states, yet it has its own logic. We need to recognize jurists such as Ebū's Su'ūd and Molla Husrev, that they tried

⁶⁰ Terzioğlu 2020, 126-127.

⁶¹ Kermeli 1997, 153.

through an inelastic system - categorising the legal personality of the Ottoman subjects on gender and religion - to find compromises, even if their methods were, as in the case of confiscation, painful⁶².

And without the overall Roman *tasavvufi* worldview that would have not been possible, at least, in an Ecumenical framework.

Possibly during the late 1540s, “after a *fetva* issued by *Şeyhülislâm* Ebussuud Efendi, Süleyman I issued an edict (*ferman*) which prohibited from then on, the usage by Christians of honorary titles and vocabulary that were intended for Muslims... The same *ferman* prohibited Christians to wear clothes similar to those Muslims wore. Christians had to wear clothes of dark colour, and of a lower quality than those of the Muslims. Similarly, their houses had to be dark in colour and not so well constructed and had to be a certain distance from Muslim residences. Christians were forbidden too from riding horses in towns, from keeping slaves or guns, from speaking loudly, etc”⁶³. Yet this needs to be additionally interpreted within the framework of the intense Sunni legal codification that the reign of Sultan Süleyman *Kanuni* (Suleyman the Lawgiver) is known for. As research on *şeriat*-court records shows⁶⁴, the issue of the position of non-Muslims in the Ottoman lands needs to be re-opened, since it seems that although these legal provisions were in place, they were only partially – if at all – enforced, and only in large cities. Even in the middle of the 16th century, Lütî Paşa mentions *reaya* dressed in *sipahi* cloth, i.e., as *askeri* class⁶⁵.

⁶² Kermeli 2012, 104.

⁶³ Zeginis 1996, 158. In fact, the Sunnised picture one could derive from the descriptions seen here is the source and focus of many influential analyses of the Ottoman *millet* system by Western scholars (see for example, Braude and Lewis 1982). It is obvious that generalising from a description valid for the 16th century indiscriminately to all periods gives a distorted picture of the Empire. This is more so since a comprehensive analysis should take into account not only the presence of ‘descriptive’ evidence of ‘Sunnisation’ (*fetvas*, etc) but essentially the way they were understood and the degree that they were or were meant to be applied. In other words, the religiopolitical environment in which they emerged and the reasons for their production should be examined as well.

⁶⁴ See for example, Çiçek, Kemal. «Living Together: Muslim-Christian Relations in Eighteenth- Century Cyprus as reflected by the Shari'a Court Records.” *Islam and Christian Muslim Relations*, 4, 1 (June 1993), 36-64, and, by the same author (1999), ‘İki Toplum Bir Şehirde Adalet Arayışları: Lefkoşa Mahkemesinde Rumlar ve Türkler (1698 – 1726)’ [‘The Search for Justice for Two Communities in one Town: Orthodox Christians and Turks in the Court of Nicossia (1698 – 1726)’], cited in Ahmetbeyoğlu, and Afyoncu 2001.

⁶⁵ See R. Tschudi 1910, *Das Asafnâme des Lutfî Pascha nach den Handschriften zu Wien, Dresden und Konstantinopel*, 35-44.

The process of Sunnisation was not the result of a fundamental difference in religious-philosophical worldviews. In those days, religiosity, as a supreme provider of personal and communal worldviews, set the 'ideological' framework for political conflicts, i.e., there was an inter-encapsulation of religion and politics. The target was not so much heterodoxy as such but, practically, only in so far as it had made the pro-Persian Turcomans, the *kızılbaşlar*, political enemies of the Ottoman state. "Coming to the events in the Ottoman period, those who from time to time were exposed to injustice and oppression by the central government or local administrators were not only those Turks who were Alevis; they were also the Sunni Turks. Because we know that in the revolts which broke out as a result of these oppressions, ..., people from both [religious] sections [i.e., Alevi and Sunni] participated"⁶⁶. As Abdülkadir Sezgin says, when Alevis were killed, they were killed not because they were Alevis but because they were seen as the enemy⁶⁷. In general, "these different revolts are peasant revolts in which not only Alevi but also Sunni peasants were oppressed"⁶⁸. Indeed, in the 16th century the term *kızılbaş* encapsulated groups that were widely differentiated. They differed with regard to the particularities of their beliefs, some being almost Sunni, some being close to *batınî* positions⁶⁹, as well as their tribal composition, some being Turcoman and others Kurdish⁷⁰. Moreover, not only tribal elements but also *sipahis* (members of the Ottoman cavalry) participated in the anti-Ottoman revolts⁷¹.

From the measures the Ottoman state took against the later 16th- century *kızılbaş* revolts, we can see that the aim was neutralisation of the political threat, not the extermination of 'heterodoxy' as such. This is easily discernible by the fact that anti-Safevî Sunni scholars and propagandists differentiated between the early 'politics-free' Safevîs who they considered as belonging to Islam proper and the later ones. For example, "Like the many Ottoman chronicles after him, Khonji pays tribute to the early sheykh of the Safavid order as true mystics and aloof from politics, and condemns Joneyd and Heydar for their worldly ambitions and alleged claims to divinity, referring to them with terms such as 'despicable devil' (*sheytân-e zalîl*) and 'bandits' (*ashqiyâ*), and to their Anatolian followers as 'the ignorant ones of Rum' (*johhâl-e Rum*)... Khonji reports that upon Joneyd's death his followers called him 'God' (*ilâh*) and his son Heydar 'the son of God' (*ebn-*

⁶⁶ Ocak 1991, 213.

⁶⁷ Ilıcak 1998.

⁶⁸ Şener 2000, 40, quoting Faruk Sümer.

⁶⁹ Ekinci 2002, 225-6.

⁷⁰ Allouche 1983, 96.

⁷¹ Allouche 1983, 96.

Allāh)”⁷². The Ottoman policy towards the rebels was death only in case they were *Râfizî* and pro-Iranian at the same time, while if they were merely *Râfizî*, it was forcible physical relocation, usually to Cyprus⁷³. As Reyhan Erdoğan Başaran writes in his article, *Does Being Rafidi Mean Shi'ite?: The Representation of the Kızılbaş Belief in the Sixteenth Century Ottoman Records*:

The ideological and political tie of the Kızılbaş with Safavid Iran distinguishes them from the rest of the mystic minority groups like the Qalandars. The usage of the term *rafidi* for different religious groups shows that a Kızılbaş can be a Rafidi but not every Rafidi is a Kızılbaş. Therefore, here, I argue that the term *rafidi* is not equivalent to the notion *kızılbaş*. The term *rafidi*, however, had been used to define the religiosity of the Kızılbaş, as far as this paper is concerned, the Kızılbaş, to our knowledge, had never been literally classified as Shi'a in the sixteenth century Ottoman chronicles. On the contrary, the *ulama* issued *fatwa* that distinguished the Kızılbaş belief from the mainstream Shi'ite Islam due to its distinctiveness in theology and rituals from mainstream Shi'ism. *Neither the Ottoman nor the Seljuk records, unlike the Rafidis, talk about the presence of any particular Shi'ite group that live in Anatolia...* While engaged in discussion of the usage of the term *rafidi* for different groups of people at different time periods, I have come to realize that *a particular group that demonstrated a disparity might face to be called as Rafidi. This implies that while defining the religious identity, the term rafidi is also used in purpose of denouncing the opponent*⁷⁴.

Without understanding also the political nature of the Sunni-Alevi differentiation we cannot solve the apparent contradiction present in the Anatolian Alevi–*kızılbaş*–Bektashi negative view of the *Yeniçeris*. This leads us to a crucial question: did the apparent Sunnisation of state religious structures and the Sunni-‘heterodox’ conflict lead to the emergence and development of a state-supported religious understanding, in essence, incompatible with Anatolian ‘popular’ Islam, either Sunni or ‘heterodox’? The answer to this is a straightforward no. The Sunnisation process went hand in hand with political developments, but always in its essence remained within previous understandings of Ottoman Islam in theophilososophical terms. The ‘metadoxical’ pattern that was based on shared beliefs and the centrality of *vahdet-i vücud* was gradually replaced by an overall framework of Sunni orthodoxy, which was nevertheless, as will be demonstrated below,

⁷² Karakaya-Stump 2022, 53.

⁷³ Savaş 1992, 22-3.

⁷⁴ Başaran 2019, 31, emphasis ours.

similarly based on *vahdet-i vücud* theophilosophy. The existing politico-doctrinal agreement of the pre-16th-century period which Kafadar has termed Ottoman ‘metadoxy’, and which was destroyed by the political designation of part of the population as ‘heterodox’, was restored, yet its contents were altered, expressing an Ottoman Sunni ‘orthodoxy’ in which *tasavvuf* was a constantly defining dimension. *The common religious-defining substratum in both eras was the Akbarian vahdet-i vücud theophilosophical doctrine.*

This is plainly clear from the fact that the ‘heterodox’ Bektashis continued to be supported by the state until 1826 by being understood and depicted as a ‘Sunni’ *tarikat*. “Despite their closeness in terms of religious beliefs, Bektashism was respected by the Ottoman administration, *Râfîzî-ism* was equated with pro-Iranianism and was cast out”⁷⁵. In his official report on the *kızılbaş* revolt during the years of Yavuz Sultan Selim, Ali b. Abdülkerim states clearly that the religious groups that related themselves to Shah Ismail were *Batınîs*, *Râfîzîs*, *Kalenderîs*, *Abdals* and *Şeyyads* but, interestingly, not the *Bektashis*⁷⁶. Indeed, it was the formerly Christian Orthodox, Bektashi *Yeniçeri* troops that became the most fearsome enemies of their co-believers, the pro-Persian *kızılbaş*, who wrought havoc and destruction in Anatolia during the *Şahkulu* rebellion (1511 AD). The *Yeniçeris*, who had been growing impatient with the more or less complete inactivity of Sultan Bayezid II and the timidity displayed by the Ottoman royal princes Korkut and Ahmed on the Safavid problem, sided with their brother, Prince Selim – who in the end, he had his father poisoned. He was brought to the throne and had as his first priority the elimination of civic turmoil⁷⁷.

All in all, Roman Ottoman *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* constitutes the source of the epiphenomenal·ly testified meta-confessional confessionism – for us to use the obnoxious term (confessionism) that have current currency with the academic Ottomanist circles - of the newly emerged Ottoman Sunnism of the 16th and 17th centuries; for as Erginbaş has documented:

The Ottoman intellectuals discussed above revered not only ‘Alī b. Abl Talīb but also all of his descendants. There was a broader movement toward reappropriation of the Ahl al-Bayt in the sixteenth-century Ottoman Empire. In the controversial environment of that century that emerged after the establishment of the Safavid state, the Ottoman intellectuals were writing an

⁷⁵ Ekinci 2002, 204-5.

⁷⁶ Ekinci 2002, 167.

⁷⁷ Ekinci 2002, 161.

alternative narrative of these Imams, although these narratives were not completely devoid of Shi'i tinges. Revering 'Alī was not a distant phenomenon to Sunni Islam, but including in this reverence all the Twelve Imams of the Shi'is was definitely not in the mainstream. *Dissemination of accounts about the Twelve Imams seems to have originated in the thirteenth century, when even the famous Sunni Şūfī of that time Ibn 'Arabī wrote a treatise about them that would become wildly popular, even in Shi'i circles...* Ottoman Sunnism, at least as defended by the significant intellectuals of the age, did not mean disowning the Shi'i Imams or their legacy; in some cases, it did not even mean rejecting Shi'i eschatological doctrine. Was there really a rupture in the sixteenth century? *This strongly Ahl al-Baytist Sunnism apparently flourished even at the peak of the Sunnitization campaigns of the sixteenth century.* Intellectuals in the close service of the court, such as Ramaẓān-zāde, showed one facet of the many Sunnisms in the Ottoman Empire. The contributions of these court historians point to the complex nature of Ottoman Sunnism. *Ottoman Sunnism is best defined as a spectrum of trends and ideas, dominated by pragmatism on the policy side, and Ahl al-Baytism on the cultural and intellectual scene, rather than by rigid confessional boundaries or entrenched religious positions*⁷⁸.

And this pragmatism was not the irreligious naked Nietzschean 'will to power' but the conditional *supra* religious utopian pragmatism and pragmatic utopia of Roman Islam.

One of the key late 15th-early 16th-century Ottoman religio- institutional developments concerns the office of the *Şeyhülislâm*. Academic opinions concerning the person and the exact time of the establishment of the office of the first Ottoman *Şeyhülislâm* diverge. According to one tradition, the title goes as far back as the father-in-law of Sultan Osman, *Şeyh/Molla Edebâlî* (d. 1326 AD), who was succeeded after his death by his student and son-in-law, Tursun Fakih⁷⁹. In addition to that, a firman sent by Sultan Murad I (r. 1360-1389 AD) to Evrenos Bey (d. 1417 AD), the former Roman Christian noble-general who was in charge of the western Ottoman army and conquered a substantial part of Rumelia (Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly) for the Ottomans, stipulates the appointment of Elvan Fakih as *Şeyhülislâm* of Rumelia⁸⁰ - which at that time was predominantly Orthodox Christian. In the Turkish historiographical tradition, Şemseddin Mehmed bin Hamza-el Fenari (d. 1430 AD) has usually been characterised as the first

⁷⁸ Erginbaş 2017, 642.

⁷⁹ Repp 1986, 112.

⁸⁰ Repp 1986, 113. There are some doubts about the authenticity of this document. On the other hand, Anhegger, who summarises the argument about its authenticity, states that it could be accepted as authentic in substance, if not word for word (Repp 1986, 113).

Ottoman *Şeyhülislâm*. I believe, as Repp states, that the dissociation of the function of the *müftülük* from the *kadılık* represents an important development towards the establishment and definition “of a chiefly ‘religious’ authority, the representative of the more spiritual aspect of the *şeriat* ...”⁸¹. From this point of view, the possibility of Fahreddin Acemî (d. 1460) being regarded as the first in the long line of Muftis of Istanbul is very real⁸². Irrespective of the debate over the exact time of the establishment of the office of the *Şeyhülislâm*, the most important point is that, as Yakut in her excellent book points out,

an organized official *fetva* institution within the state had not been encountered in the Islamic or in the Turkish-Islamic states before the Ottomans. Such an institution emerged for the first time along with the Ottoman state, and the heads of this institution were given the title ‘*Şeyhülislâm*’⁸³.

Although the process of religious bureaucratisation started in the time of Fatih Mehmed, as Akgündüz states, at the end of his reign there were still more or less equal centres of *fetva*-production in Edirne, Bursa, and Istanbul⁸⁴. An important point to be noted is that, as the case of the cash *evkaf* (‘charitable foundations’) and *mash* (‘performing ablutions wearing footwear, rather than with bare feet’) shows, although the *Şeyhülislâm* was presiding over the *ulema*, it did not mean that, necessarily and by fiat, his opinion on a religious matter would prevail over that of other *ulema*. Moreover, in policy decisions, the Sultan could consult other *ulema* as well⁴³²⁸⁵. This gives us a picture of the *Şeyhülislâm* occupying more a position of ‘first among equals’ – like the Orthodox Patriarch – than a Papal one based on religious omnipotence.

The first *Şeyhülislâm* of the period relating to the *kızılbaş* revolts was Zembilli Ali Efendi, who first occupied the position in the reign of Bayezid II (1503 AD) and remained there throughout Yavuz Sultan Selim’s reign (1512- 1520 AD) and into that of Suleyman I *Kanuni* (1520-1566 AD) until his death (1526 AD). In his book, *The Transformation of Muslim Mystical Thought in The Ottoman Empire: The Rise of the Halveti Order, 1350-1650*, John Curry writes that: “Cemâl el-Halvetî as a pivotal figure in the spread of the Halveti order among the Ottoman domains. Born in the central

⁸¹ Repp 1986, 119.

⁸² Repp 1986, 119.

⁸³ Yakut 2005, 205.

⁸⁴ Akgündüz 2002, 41.

⁸⁵ Repp 1986, 215.

Anatolian city of Aksaray to a prominent and influential family that also included such luminaries as the future *şeyhülislâm* Zembilli ‘Alî Efendi and Sultan Selim I’s vizier Pîrî Paşa, he was a figure of potential influence in the Ottoman context”⁸⁶. We saw the role of Mevlevi/Halveti-inclined Grand Vizier Pîrî Paşa in saving the Orthodox Churches from conversion into mosques above. He was succeeded by Kemal Paşazade Ahmed Şemseddin (1468/9- 1534 AD), who held the post between 1526 and 1534. As we have seen above, another important *Şeyhülislâm* of *Kanuni* and Sultan Selim II (1566 – 1574 AD) was Ebussuud Efendi (d. 1574 AD), who served between 1545 and 1574. All three personalities, and particularly the latter two, constitute pivotal points of reference for the definition of Ottoman Sunni religiosity in the successive centuries. Through the examination of the relevant Sultans and their *Şeyhülislâms* as heads of the *İlmiyye*, the centrality of *tasavvuf* in post-16th-century state Ottoman religiosity becomes clear. Among the key definitional elements of the Sunnisation process were the *fetvas* of these *Şeyhülislâms*. *Şeyhülislâm* Zembilli Ali Efendi, who occupied the post for 24 years and issued a number of anti-*kızılbaş* *fetvas*, was a disciple of the Zeyniyye *Şeyh*, *Şeyh* Vefa (d. 1491 AD)⁸⁷. The Zeyniyye *tarikât* had ‘spiritual chains’ (*silsile*) leading to both Ebu Bekir and Ali. Due to some problems over the issue of the *devrân*⁸⁸-based *zikr* (*dikhr*) (repetitious Sufi prayer), Zembilli issued a number of *fetvas* defending the Sufi position, as well as a pro-Sufi treatise⁸⁹.

It was none other than Yavuz Sultan Selim himself who reinstated Ibn Arabi in the Arab lands. After the conquest of Mamluk-ruled Syria, he entered Damascus in the autumn of 1516. “For 300 years the tomb of Ibn Arabi had been hidden away within the precincts of the family cemetery of the Banu Zaki, protected from all the turbulence. Those who visited his tomb had had to do so in secret, in case the jurists came to hear of it. Now all this changed. Within two weeks the Sultan paid a visit to an Anatolian Sufi, al-Balkhashi, whose reverence for Ibn Arabi was such that he would be the first person to be buried next to him since the thirteenth century. In December, only a month and a half after entering Damascus, the Sultan himself came to pay his respects at the forgotten tomb of Ibn Arabi and distributed large sums of money to the local inhabitants. When he returned from conquering Cairo in October 1517, Selim immediately ordered the

⁸⁶ Curry 2010, 65.

⁸⁷ Öngören 2000b., 343, quoting Taşkörpizâde, Müstakimzâde, Vassâf and Bursalı.

⁸⁸ *Devrân* is the turning of the body with arms crossed over the shoulders during the performance of *tekke* music, as part of the *sema*.

⁸⁹ Öngören 2000b., 343.

building of a mosque next to the tomb. In three months and twenty-five days the mosque was completed, and the Sultan, with the qadi, ministers, and other notables, rode to the district of Salihyya for a great ceremony of inauguration. Suddenly Ibn Arabi was no longer *persona non grata* [in the newly Ottoman-ising Arab Damascus]”⁹⁰. Moreover, out of reverence for him Selim “exempt[ed] the residents of the Şālīhiyya from taxes ...”⁹¹.

Indeed, “with Selim, Ibn Arabī became the protector saint of the most powerful Muslim dynasty of the era”⁹². Selim assigned the task of composing an official apology for the Greatest Şeyh to the Meccan theologian Abu l’-Fath Muhammad Ibn Muzaffar, popularly known as Şeyh Makki (Şeyh Mekki)⁹³. “Shaikh Makki wrote *al-Janib al-gharbi fi hall mushkilat Ibn al ‘Arabi* [Tr *el-Cânibul-Garbî fi halli müşkilâtı Şeyh Muhyiddîn İbnü-l-Arabî*], attempting to clarify some of the misunderstandings about Ibn ‘Arabi’s thoughts in a language even narrow-minded people would understand”⁹⁴. Following this initiative, many Ottoman *ulema* and others produced a body of about forty commentaries on Akbarian works. Şeyh Mekki’s work was translated into Ottoman Turkish from Persian by Mirzazâde Ahmed Neylî (1673/4 – 1748 AD) under the title *el-Fazlu’l-Vehbî fi tercemeti’l-Cânibi’l-Garbî*, in the first half of the 18th century, a period in which Akbarian theophilosophy would gradually come under increasing attack by certain orthopractic religious functionaries in Istanbul itself⁹⁵.

Like his predecessors, Yavuz Sultan Selim was the disciple of a Şeyh(s) and affiliated to different *tarikats*. According to Şapolyo, Yavuz Sultan Selim was a member of the *Sünbülüyye*, a branch of the *Halvetiyye*⁹⁶. The Şeyh of the *Şabâniyye*, ‘Ömer el- Fu’âdî (d. 1636 AD), claimed that the founder of the *Sünbülüye* branch of the *Halvetiyye*, Sünbül Efendi’s “*Risâlat al- tahqîqiyya* was written after he had defeated an anti-Sufi nemesis, Molla ‘Arab Mehmed b. ‘Ömer (d. 938/1531), in open debate before Selim himself, who judged the Sünbülüye leader to be in the right”⁹⁷. According to Baha Sait, who in the mid-late 1910s was commissioned by the Committee of Union and Progress to research the Bektashi-Alevi communities in

⁹⁰ Hirtenstein 1999, 241-2.

⁹¹ Fenton 1997, 29.

⁹² Atlagh 1999, 15.

⁹³ Knysh 1999, 4.

⁹⁴ Bayrak in Ibn Arabi 1997, xvi.

⁹⁵ Aynî 1923 – 1925 [1339 – 1341], 179. For the whole text of Şeyh Mekki Efendi’s and Ahmed Neyli Efendi’s work on Ibn Arabi, see Şeyh Mekki 2004.

⁹⁶ Şapolyo 1964, 448.

⁹⁷ Curry 2010, 273; Curry debates the pros and cons of this claim.

Anatolia, Yavuz Selim was himself Bektashi, despite him having temporarily closed down the main *tekke* in Hacı Bektaş⁹⁸. In light of this and the doctrinal proximity between *Râfîzî-ism* and Bektashism, it is clear that the reasons for the Ottoman-*kızılbaş*/orthodoxy-heterodoxy conflict were basically political and not essentially religious.

During the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent, the *Şeyhülislâm* Kemal Paşazade (Ibn Kemal) issued a *fetva* commanding “that from henceforth the works of Ibn Arabi should be officially studied throughout Ottoman lands... [Kemal Paşazade] himself wrote a commentary on [Ibn Arabi’s] *Fusus al-Hikam*. The official reinstatement had been rapid and effective. Ottoman patronage also encouraged the publication of works by the famous sixteenth-century Egyptian, ‘Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha’rani, who defended Ibn Arabi’s orthodoxy vigorously. As his teachings were so clearly held in deep respect by all Ottomans, the opposition of the doctors of law within the Arab world remained effectively muted until after the break-up of the Ottoman Empire”⁹⁹. According to Knysh, Al-Shar’ani’s works constituted “the most influential apology for, and popularisation of, Ibn Arabi’s teaching ...”¹⁰⁰. Moreover, Kemal Paşazade issued an official prohibition (legal opinion) on public defamation of Ibn Arabi effective in all the lands of the Empire¹⁰¹.

Kemal Paşazade’s *fetva*, which was written in Arabic, and so most probably aimed at the orthopractic exoteric Sunni scholars of the Arab lands, read as follows:

We declare to all men: Know that the Greatest *Şeyh*, the honourable leader, the pole (*kutb*) of the knowers, the imam of those who believe in divine unity, the Andalusian of the Hatem Tay tribe, *Muhammed b. Arabi*, is a perfect expounder of Islamic law (*müctehid*) and virtuous *tasavvuf* guide (*mürşid*). He accomplished astonishing deeds and amazing states, and, he had many esteemed students among men of knowledge and virtuous persons. The one who denies him is in error. If he insists in his denial, he deviates from the right path. The Sultan must educate and change the opinion of this person. Because the Sultan has been assigned with the duty of commanding the good and preventing the bad. [Ibn Arabi] has [written] many works. Among them the most famous are the *Fususul-Hikem* and the *Fütuhât-ı Mekkiyye*. There are some topics the letter and the spirit of which is evident and in accordance to the divine order and the Prophetic law. There are also some topics which are evident in the understanding of people of the revelation and the esoteric (*keşf ve bâtin ehli*), [but] veiled from the

⁹⁸ Küçük 2002, 34, quoting Bahâ’ Sa’îd, *Tekke ‘Alawîlighı*, 205-6.

⁹⁹ Hirtenstein 1999, 242.

¹⁰⁰ Knysh 1999, 4.

¹⁰¹ Knysh 1999, 4.

understanding of people of the exoteric (*zâhir ehli*). The one who is in the station of ignorance *vis-a-vis* the intended meaning needs to keep his silence. Because the Almighty Allah [Sura Isra', 36] [said]: "Do not pursue what you have not knowledge of, because the ears, the eyes and the heart are responsible for this"¹⁰².

"This *fatwa* of the Shaykh al-Islam announced to the public the intellectual [i.e., religious] attitude of the Ottomans – sultans, scholars and Sufis – with regard to Ibn 'Arabî in particular and Sufism and Islam in general"¹⁰³. It is clear that by depicting the Greatest *Şeyh* as both a perfect legal scholar and a great Sufi, as well as by focusing on the exoteric- esoteric unity of 'letter and spirit', the *fetva* recognizes Akbarian *tasavvuf* as the highest form of Islamic religious understanding. The mentality underlying the *fetva* is totally Akbarian, since it is in line with Ibn Arabî's dictum that while the exoteric scholar can deny *tasavvuf*, the 'Sufi' denies nothing. "We may also draw from this *fatwa* the following idea: since the teaching of Ibn 'Arabî contains two aspects, one exoteric and the other esoteric, and so is suitable in part to the exoteric understanding and in part hidden from it, but clear to the understanding of the people of intuition and of esoterism, we should conclude that Islamic teaching, that is to say, the Qur'ân and the Prophetic Tradition, also has two aspects. A person who does not manage to grasp the exoteric teaching of Ibn 'Arabî and thereby of Islam should keep silent rather than attack those who do understand it - for those who grasp the esoteric meaning grasp the exoteric meaning equally"¹⁰⁴. It is also clear that this, along with the public acts of veneration described above, was a declaration of Ottoman religiosity as such, and its source was not a mere instrumental understanding of Ibn Arabî and *tasavvuf*. As Tahralı rightly states, "this *fatwa* was aimed at the exoteric scholars of Egypt and Syria, rather than those of Anatolia or the Ottoman Balkans"¹⁰⁵. If the Ottomans had understood *tasavvuf* primarily as an instrument of essentially non-religious aims and political consolidation and empire-building, - to a large degree like the Mamluks' political/religious policy of 'pick-and-mix' - it would have been much easier for them to avoid antagonising the local

¹⁰² Ibn-i Kemal in Dalkiran 1997, 182-183. It is interesting that, as we will see, Atatürk 'orders' a similar silence to those who cannot comprehend the inner reality of the Mevlevi *tasavvuf* doctrine.

¹⁰³ Tahralı 1999 (<http://www.ibnarabisociety.org/articles/ottomanera.html> (April 3rd, 2009)).

¹⁰⁴ Tahralı 1999 (<http://www.ibnarabisociety.org/articles/ottomanera.html> (April 3rd, 2009)).

¹⁰⁵ Tahralı 1999 (<http://www.ibnarabisociety.org/articles/ottomanera.html> (April 3rd, 2009)).

ulema, who were to a large extent hostile to Ibn Arabi. It is not at all accidental that in the Süleymaniye Library (around 2010 AD), while all Ottoman manuscripts are found stored in alphabetical order, Ibn Arabi's works and their Ottoman commentaries are such in volume that they are set apart, occupying two large drawers on their own. As Ay points out, in addition to the benefits relating to socio-political life, the continuous close relations of the Seljuk and Ottoman Sultans and the various state administrators to the Anatolian dervishes as their disciples (*mürîrî*) and friends (*muhîp*) was also based on the former's own personal religious feelings: "Those [Seljuk and Ottoman] rulers who believed in the *tasavvufî* identity and spiritual authority of the *şeyhs* established close relations to renowned *şeyhs* of their epoch [both] for the development of their own spiritual world as well as for their worldly success"¹⁰⁶. Moreover, an important point from the state-religion relations point of view is not only that, as Tahrâlî says, the *fetva* gave the right to the Sultan to intervene in favour of Ibn Arabi, but that *the Sultan had a supporting spiritual responsibility and function*. This reminds us of the 'isapostolic' (*equal to an Apostle*) status similarly conferred on the Roman Christian emperor by the state-related religious authority.

Both Kemal Paşazade and Ebussuud produced a number of particular *fetvas* or opinions on certain practices like the *devrân*, *sema* and *zîkr*. In these, they criticised specific types of these practices. For example, *Halvetîs* were particularly criticised by the pure legalists for their *devrân* and *sema*-based *zîkr*. Kemal Paşazade opposed their type of *devran* too. Yet his opinion targeted neither *devran* as such, nor the *Halvetîs* as a whole. As he himself said to Sünbül (Sinan) Efendi (d. 1529), the founder of the *Sünbülüyye* branch of the *Halvetiyye tarikat*, his *fetva* did not apply to them but was written for those prodigals who did not know the essence and had left the correct way (*mezheb*)¹⁰⁷. In his analysis of Kemal Paşazade's anti-*devran* *fetva*, Beşîr Efendi essentially points out that its aim was to prohibit certain types of movements found in certain types of *devra*¹⁰⁸. In other words, the relevant *fetvas* were limited in scope and application and aimed at correcting certain and particular types of *devran* and *sema*, and do not reveal an anti-*tasavvuf* attitude on the part of the writers. Indeed, both Kemal Paşazade and Ebussuud progressively clarified their previous opinions and expressed more fully pro-*tasavvuf* positions¹⁰⁹. In his treatise

¹⁰⁶ Ay 2008, 154.

¹⁰⁷ Öngören 2000b., 380.

¹⁰⁸ Öngören 2000b., 380.

¹⁰⁹ For a detailed analysis of the issues of *devrân*, *sema* and *zîkr*, see Öngören 2000b., 369-84 and Dalkıran 1997, 179-182.

in which the relevant practices are more broadly discussed, Kemal Paşazade attests to the permissibility of *devrân* and *raks* (religious dancing) and stipulates *zîkr* as *farz* (obligatory)¹¹⁰. Similarly, Ebussuud's *fetva* on the issue of *zîkr* in general answers the question as to what should happen in terms of the *şeriat* to those who perform *zîkr*, by stating: "Allah knows what the right is; those who perform [*zîkr*] are granted merit [/grace] abundantly (*işleyene çok bol sevap lazım gelir*)"¹¹¹.

If one looks at the religious understanding of Kemal Paşazade, it is clear that it portrayed an Akbarian understanding based on unity and balance between the esoteric and the exoteric. It was constructed around relevant theosophical and cosmological concepts like the Oneness of God, the Unity of Being, the divine names and attributes that are not identical with God's Essence, the negative attributes (*selbî sıfatlar*), and the positive attributes (*subûti sıfatlar*), the possibility of knowing the divine names (i.e., an anti-Ghazzali position) and the perfect man¹¹². For Ibn Kemal, being as such is the union of the exoteric and the esoteric. The Created world, "the universe (*âlem*), is the exoteric aspect of *Hakk* (*âlem Hakk'ın zâhiridir*)", which is sustained and continuously connected to the *Hakk*: "The continuous existence of the universe is dependent on God's names (*isimler*) and attributes (*sıfatlar*). When he looks at the universe, the gnostic (*ârif*) knows that the universe is the mirror of God (of His names and attributes). The dictum of some gnostics that '*I see God in everything I gaze upon, I see nothing which does not contain God within it*' has this meaning. *Hakk* is the knowledge of the esoteric"¹¹³. These views, which as we have seen constitute key doctrinal elements of Roman *tasavvuf*, he termed the views of *Ehl-i Sünnet*, the Sunnis. In other words, he saw this religious understanding as underlying Ottoman Sunni orthodoxy. It was an understanding in which the exoteric (*şeriat-fıkıh*, philosophy, *kelam*) and the esoteric (*Hak*, *tasavvuf*) are mutually fulfilling and doctrinally united. As we have seen in Chapter 2, this understanding of a doctrinal synthesis and unification of *fıkıh*, *kelam* and *tasavvuf* was central to the Ottoman *ulema* from the early days of the Empire¹¹⁴. Kemal Paşazade was initiated in the *Gülşenîyye-i Halvetiyye*

¹¹⁰ Dalkıran 1997, 181-182.

¹¹¹ Aynî 1924 [1340], 244.

¹¹² Kemal Paşazade's views on these matters are elaborated in Dalkıran 1997, 3rd Section (*3üncü Bölüm*).

¹¹³ Kemal Paşazade in Dalkıran 1997, 130.

¹¹⁴ See also Öngören 2000. Interestingly, Prince Mehmed Korkud (1467-1513 AD), the son of Sultan Bayezid II Veli, produced a work following the same line of religious understanding under the title, *Hâfizu'l-insân an lâfizi'l-imân*. He also wrote a treatise on *tasavvuf* titled, *Kitab fi't-Tasavvuf*, (or *Kitâb'ül-Harîmî*).

tarikât by its founder, *Şeyh İbrahim Gülşeni* (d. 1533-1534 AD)¹¹⁵. “İbn Kemal, in whose system of ideas *tasavvuf* appears to have been an important influence, established close relations with *Şeyh Mahmud Çelebi* (d. 1531-1532), who was the successor and son in law of the Nakşi *Şeyh*, Emîr Buhârî, and also, with the Bayramî *Şeyh* Abdurrahim Müeyyedî (d. 1537-1538), who was the husband of the sister of [the future *Şeyhülislâm*] Ebussuud Efendî”¹¹⁶. After an initial period of hostility before he had become a disciple (*intisap etti*) of *Şeyh İbrahim Gülşeni*, İbn Kemal established a deep friendship with *Şeyh Sünbül* (Sinan) Efendî (d. 1529). According to Mustafa ‘Âlî’s *Künhü’l-ahbâr*, as a result of that friendship, they quickly set up regular and frequent meetings¹¹⁷. According to Vassâf’s *Sefîne*, İbn Kemal was so sad after *Şeyh Sünbül*’s death that he wrote an elegy (*mersiye*) in his memory¹¹⁸.

Ebussuud Efendî was the son of *Şeyh Yavsi* (d. 1514 AD), of the *Bayramiyye*, who was the author of a commentary on the *Varidat* of the Akbarian scholar Bedreddin Simavî (d. 1420 AD). He was most probably born in the Sivasî *Tekke* (Yavsi Baba *Tekke*) in the Fatih district of İstanbul, which was headed by his father. His education reflects a balance and unity between the exoteric (law, *kelam*) and esoteric (*tasavvuf*) sciences. According to Repp, he received his licence from his father, from Abdurrahman Müeyyedî (d. 1516 AD), and from Molla Seyyidî Mehmed b. Mehmed (most probably identified as Seyyidî *Çelebi*, or else known as Muhyiddin Seyyidî Mehmed b. Mehmed Kocevi)¹¹⁹. Müeyyedîzade, who served as *Rumeli kazasker* during Yavuz Sultan Selim’s reign, came from a prominent family of *ulema* and *şeyhs*. For example, his brother, *Şeyh Abdurrahim Müeyyedî* (d. 1537 -1538 AD) of the *Bayramiyye* order, known as *Hacı Çelebi* or *Hacı Efendî*, was a successor (*halife*) of Ebussuud’s father, *Şeyh Yavsi*¹²⁰. As we have seen, he was Ebussuud’s relative (*enişte*). Before he entered *tasavvuf*, Ebussuud had studied the exoteric sciences with famous scholars such as Sinan Paşa and Hocaşade. In this environment, it is not difficult to see the proximity of Ebussuud to *tasavvuf*. He was himself a member of the *Bayramiyye* order and had established close relations with the *Halvetiyye*. “According to him, the thing that Sufis of Islam call the reality (*hakikat*) and the way (*tarikât*) is the essence and the summary of the

¹¹⁵ Öngören 2000b., 345.

¹¹⁶ Öngören 2000b., 345.

¹¹⁷ *Künhü’l-ahbâr*, vr 168a, cited in Öngören 2000b., 346.

¹¹⁸ Vassâf, *Sefîne*, III, 251, cited in Öngören 2000b., 346.

¹¹⁹ Repp 1986, 274.

¹²⁰ Öngören 2000b., 160.

law (*şeriat*)”¹²¹. In one of his *fetvas*, he stated that “the knowledge of Allah is like an endless sea. The Glorious Sufis are the divers of that sea. We are the people of the shore. In this matter, we cannot be compared to them”¹²².

Moreover, the actual conduct of the *Şeyhülislâms*, who continued publicly to honour celebrated Sufi masters, as Zilfi states, underlines the restricted nature of their ‘anti-Sufi’ *fetvas*. “Kemal Pashazade presided at the funeral services for the Halveti shaikh Sünbül Efendi (d. 1529), as Ebussuud did for the Kadiri Abdülkerim (d. 1549) and the Halveti Ümmi Sinan (d. 1551), dancers and chanters all. Had Kemal Pashazade or Ebussuud intended their negative juristic pronouncements as a major offensive against popular religion – as their *Kadızedeli* quoters in the following century led their audiences to believe – they could have found some way to avoid the appearance of approving of the Sufis, especially in a time when risks to the *Şeyhülislâms*’ lives and careers were patently minimal”¹²³.

In fact, the careers of the Ottoman *Şeyhülislâms* were threatened from exactly the opposite direction, i.e., when they became critical of *tasavvuf* as a whole. In 1542, the primary reason for which *Kanuni* Sultan Süleyman dismissed the *Şeyhülislâm* Çivizâde Muhyiddin Efendi (d. 1547 AD) was his pronouncements against the *tasavvuf* philosophy of Ibn Arabi and Celaleddin Rumi¹²⁴. “*Kanuni* was a man who had a great love for Mevlana and felt a deep interest in *tasavvuf*”¹²⁵. He performed *zikr* with Mevlevîs, *Nakşibendis*, *Halvetis*, and *Bayramis*. According to Esrar Dede, he was initiated into the Mevlevî order¹²⁶. According to Şapolyo, he was a member of the *Gülşenîyye* branch of the *Halvetiyye*¹²⁷. According to Bektashi sources, *Kanuni* was formally initiated into that *tarikât*: “A famous ruler such as Kanûnî Süleyman, who was a devotee (*muhîbb*) of Bektashism (he entered the first rank of Bektashism with a formal ceremony having given his pledge of allegiance to the *tarikât*) ... As he considered his membership an honour for himself, he assumed the pseudonym *Muhîbbî*”¹²⁸.

¹²¹ Atâ’î, *Zeyl-i Şekâik*, cited in Öngören 2000b., 349-350.

¹²² Öngören 2000b., 384. This *fetva* can be found in the India Office Library and Records, (Or. 12933), in London.

¹²³ Zilfi 1988, 210-211.

¹²⁴ V. L. Ménage cited in Repp 1986, 252; Öngören 2000b., 355. See also Kahraman 1998, 307. For a discussion of the other reasons for Çivizâde’s dismissal, see Repp 1986, 250-252.

¹²⁵ Altunsu 1972, 23, n. 1.

¹²⁶ Öngören 2000b., 251.

¹²⁷ Şapolyo 1964, 448.

¹²⁸ Noyan (Dedebaba) 1999, 179.

Indicative of the composition and religious attitudes of the higher Ottoman *ulema* was the case of Molla Kabız. This case not only shows that prominent *ulema* members supported Sufism in its Ibn Arabian – Rumi – Bektashi form and at least some of them vigorously supported ‘heterodox’ positions, but it reveals the real attitudes of its members towards these positions¹²⁹. Molla Kabız publicly preached the supremacy of Christ over Mohammed, claiming that it was not possible even to compare the two¹³⁰. On Nov 3, 1527 he was tried in the imperial *divan*. In his trial, he based his defence on verses from the Koran and *hadith*, claims that the judges, the Rumeli *kazasker* Fenarizade Muhyiddin *Çelebi* and the Anadolu *kazasker* Molla Kadiri *Çelebi* failed to counter in religious terms. He was thus acquitted¹³¹. Only after the personal intervention of *Kanuni* Süleyman himself, in other words by political intervention, was he retried in the presence of the Müfti, Kemalpaşazade, and the *kadı* of *Konstantiniyye*, Sa’di *Çelebi*, convicted and later executed.

The case of Molla Kabız constituted a turning point in Ottoman religious history, in the sense that while from the early 16th century the *ulema* issued *fetvas* against their political enemies, the Safavids, declaring them enemies of Islam, a clear definition of heresy and of heretical enemy had not been fully developed. There was no previous need for that, since, as Ustijn says, the evidence of early Ottoman chronicles suggests that up until the late 15th century the Ottomans based their claim to religious legitimacy on “folk Islam”¹³². It was Molla Kabız’s case that was the point of departure for a legal definition of the term *zındık* (‘heretic’) that would apply to the enemies of the Ottoman state. Kemal Paşazade’s treatise on *zendaka* provided the basis for an Ottoman definition. He adopted the concept from *fukaha* of the 11th-12th century. The term *zındık* was not originally juristic. Ghazali used it to denote a type of heretic, yet it was ultimately based on *fikh* particularly in order to combat the *Ismailis* and *Batinis* of that era. Kemalzade also produced another treatise on *sabb al- Nabi* (‘cursing the Prophet’), which additionally serves to point out religious impropriety and define the heretical enemy. As Ustijn says, Kemal Paşazade’s *sabb* makes the offender

¹²⁹ The case of Molla Kabız in arguing for the superiority of Christ over the Prophet Muhammad was not unique. For a detailed analysis of the presence of Ottoman Muslim preachers supporting similar views, see Imber 1990, and Balivet 1990. What is of specific interest in Imber’s article is his observation that *these public preachers came actively to the fore at times when the Empire was threatened externally or internally*.

¹³⁰ Zengin 1996, 139.

¹³¹ Repp 1986, 234-5.

¹³² Ustijn 1991, 269.

liable to the death penalty with no possibility for repentance, although he personally preferred Abu Hanifa's view of retaining that option¹³³. So, for obvious political/state security reasons, the Ottomans deviated from Abu Hanifa's practice on this issue. As for Ebussud Efendi, living in a calmer political era, he kept both options open. In his *fetva* against *al-Rawafid*, Kemal Paşazade deals with the issue of cursing the Companions of the Prophet, which is an offence meriting the death penalty. As Ustijn says, the inspiration for this view was clearly the Ottoman need to justify action against the *kızılbaş* and Oğlan *Şeyh*. The first cursed Abu Bekir and Ömer, while some *Melametis*, particularly Oğlan *Şeyh*, could be seen as assigning imperfection to the Prophet. *Şeyh* İsmail Mâşûkî (1508/1509-1529 AD), popularly known as Oğlan *Şeyh*, preached Ibn Arabi's *wahdat al-wujud* (*unity of being*). "Undoubtedly simply the enormous popularity which [he] seems to have enjoyed was sufficient to cause the authorities to view his activities with suspicion. According to the Melami tradition, however, what hastened his downfall was his causing his disciples to say in the *dhikr* (*zikir*) not 'Allah Allah', but 'Allahım Allahım' – which, depending on stress, may mean either 'My God, my God' or 'I am God, I am God' – an idiosyncrasy the orthodox could not fail to find offensive"¹³⁴. He was tried and beheaded in the Hippodrome in late 1529 AD. The interesting point to note is that the 16th-century politically inspired executions of Molla Kabız and Oğlan *Şeyh* differ from 15th-century ones. The 16th-century executions were related to state policy. Yet the 15th-century executions were more or less a matter of personal enmity, as for example was that of Molla Lüfti (d. 1495)¹³⁵, former librarian of the personal library of Fatih Sultan Mehmed.

Reşat Öngören's detailed and serious study focusing on Ottoman Anatolian Sunni *tasavvuf*, state and *ulema* in the 16th century provides us with an overall summary of the period. Unfortunately, the study excludes Bektashism, since according to the author, the *Bektashis* at the time of Sultan Balım assumed a Shii character¹³⁶ - a view that even the 16th-century Ottoman state did not accept. The study concentrates solely on Anatolia, leaving Rumelia, a region in which Bektashi activity predominated and where the majority of the *devşirme* originated from, undiscussed. These

¹³³ Ustijn 1991, 273.

¹³⁴ Repp 1986, 236.

¹³⁵ Ustijn 1991, 270.

¹³⁶ Öngören 2000b., 231. According to a *fetva* of Ebussud EfendiEfendi, the *kızılbaş* were not Shii, despite themselves claiming to be so (the full text of the *fetva* can be found in Öz 1997, 118). The most influential 20th-century author putting forward the erroneous thesis of *Bektaşis* as 'Shii' was Fuat Köprülü. It has been unquestionably repeated by a variety of Turkish and Western authors ever since.

self-imposed research restrictions, which simply point out the overall conceptual approach and inherent shortcomings, do not diminish the overall validity of the findings and the importance of the study. The overall summary for the 16th-century (1500 – 1566 AD) Sunni Anatolian *tarikats*, state and *ulema* is as follows¹³⁷:

- Continuing the pattern of the previous Ottoman centuries, *tasavvuf* activity was fully fledged in Anatolia, with new *tarikats* added to the previous ones.
- The views of the Akbarian school, established in the 13th century by Ibn Arabi, continued, as in the previous Seljuk and Ottoman centuries, to be passed from generation to generation by important personalities.
- The *tarikats* that were most widespread and important for the state were the *Halvetiyye*. Another important *tarikats* was the *Bayramiyye*, and the *Nakşibendiyye* was the most popular order among the *ulema*. We need to note here that the 16th-century *Nakşibendiyye* had not yet moved away from *vahdet-i vücud* theosophy. Rumi's Mevlevi *tarikats* (*Çelebiler* branch) seems to have been restricted in terms of popularity and effect to the area around Konya. In terms of intensity and dynamism in *tasavvuf*, Istanbul was the centre of *tasavvuf* activity, and the city was almost in every corner flooded with *tekkes* and *dergâhs* (large *tekkes*).
- The vast majority of the people remained close to the dervishes and *tasavvuf*.
- State officials and palace people, including the Sultans, their mothers and women, Grand Viziers, provincial governors, members of the army and administrators, remained very close to the *Şeyhs* and gave official support to various *tarikats*. The state entrusted to *Şeyhs* positions in the Palace as spiritual teachers, army imams, imams to the Sultan, and physicians, and allowed them to issue *fetvas* like the *Şeyhülislâm*.
- Three *Şeyhs* received capital punishment in the period. This does not at all signify an anti-Sufi state attitude, since members of the *ulema* were also executed.
- The majority of the *Şeyhs* followed also the exoteric sciences.

¹³⁷ Öngören 2000b., 397-402.

- Among them, we find directors of *medreses* and religious judges (*kadı*). *Ulema* were also attracted to the *tekke*, which became the central point of spiritual interaction between the *ulema* and the people.
- The exotericity-esotericity balance was the means by which *ulema* members came closer to the *tekke*, and they became members of the various orders, particularly the *Nakşibendiyye*. *Nakşibendis* performed the silent/secret *zikr*.

As far as the *Bektaşîyye* is concerned, as Curry writes:

From Bayezid II's time up until the end of the eighteenth century, at least 14 Bektaşî lodges were founded in Istanbul, many of them with significant financial backing from various waqfs, some of them established by the Sultan himself. These lodges had close ties with the janissary corps, with powerful janissary figures sometimes able to intervene in who would be chosen as the leaders at the Hacı Bektaş convent in Anatolia. This was more than matched by a proliferation of lodges, waqf-properties, and shaykhs across various regions of Anatolia, to the point where there were at least 150 recognized Bektaşî institutions documented during the suppression of the order in 1826. Moreover, Bektaşî institutions, some dating from the early periods of Ottoman expansion, also proliferated across various parts of the Balkans and Greece, many of which survived the vicissitudes of both Ottoman suppression of the order and the ravages of the Balkan Wars. Going hand in hand with this proliferation of the order's institutions, from the seventeenth century onward the relationship between the janissary corps and the Bektaşî order became increasingly inseparable, which came to be reflected in Ottoman discourse about the nature of the janissaries¹³⁸.

The destruction, even if partial, of the Ottoman 'metadoxy' and the subsequent Sunni orientation moved legitimacy from the 'Akbarian Sunni-Alevi' part more towards the 'Orthopractic (merely exoteric)-Akbarian Sunni' part of the Ottoman state religiosity. The Sunnisation process was accentuated even more after about 1570 AD. After that date, the *Şeyhülislâm*'s jurisdiction was expanded and became more central in state affairs, to the detriment of the traditional roles played by the Grand Vizier, *kadıasker*, and other functionaries. There was a partial refocusing of the legal system towards *şeriat* and *fetvas*¹³⁹, and away from *örfi* ('customary',

¹³⁸ Curry 2021, 411.

¹³⁹ For an overall treatment of the office of *Şeyhülislâm* until 1826, see Akgündüz, Murat 2002.

‘worldly’) justice¹⁴⁰. This religious environment permitted purely orthopractic Sunni movements to gain at least temporary influence. The refocusing of Ottoman religiosity allowed for a climate in which issues previously seen as secondary, yet in no way unimportant in Islamic terms, assumed an unwarranted importance in a manner antagonistic to central theological and epistemological issues.

Whereas earlier Ottoman scholars had focused on high-level metaphysical issues, and discussed such problems as how they could unite and benefit from all three religious groups: theologians (*mutakallimūn*), philosophers (*falāsifā*), and Sufis (*muhaqqiqūn*), later scholars restricted themselves to discussing such matters as whether or not they would permit the drinking of coffee¹⁴¹.

As Kazancıgil argues, the Ottoman state in the 17th century experienced not only a great socioeconomic but also a perilous scientific crisis¹⁴². Through this process the Ottoman state gradually became alienated from a section of its subjects.

The 17th-century Ottoman Religiosity: A Summary

The anti-Roman orthopractic Sunni movement that really constituted a challenge to Ottoman Islam in religious-philosophical terms came in the early 17th century and was known as the *Kadızedeli* movement, after its spiritual founder, Kadızade Mehmed (d. 1635). It followed the thought of the 16th-century theologian Birgili Mehmed ibn Pir Ali (d. 1573)¹⁴³. It was a purely orthopractic-literalist-theocratic movement, which denounced what its adherents saw as ‘innovation’, including substances such as coffee, tobacco and opium and practices like *sema*, *raks*, *devrân*, pilgrimages to the tombs of saints, invocation of blessings upon the Prophet and his Companions upon every mention of their names, those supererogatory prayers and other rituals that were performed collectively (as distinct from the perfectly acceptable ‘extra’ prayers said by the individual believer) and were not original to the patriarchal community, and shaking hands in

¹⁴⁰ Oğuzoğlu 2000, 51.

¹⁴¹ Kılıç 1999, 112.

¹⁴² Kazancıgil 2000, 165.

¹⁴³ On his life and theological posture, see the relevant book (2020) of Katharina Ivanyi, an important work that nevertheless does not explore his relation to Sufism in-depth.

greeting and bowing down before social superiors¹⁴⁴. They also opposed communal Islamic-Christian multi-confessional prayers, a practice widely present particularly in times of Ottoman military campaigns. It is interesting to note that in that period the anti-Roman pressure on Ottoman Islam correlated with a similar pressure on Roman Christianity from Catholicism (especially Jesuits) and Protestants. The *Kadıızadeli* period coincided with the reign of the anti-Catholic and apparently pro-Protestant Orthodox Christian Patriarch, Kyrillos Loukaris (r. 1620– 1638) in *Kostantiniyye*.

More critically, the *Kadıızadeli*s challenged not only practices but essentially the Sufi doctrine. They execrated “the writings of Muhiy’l-Din ibn Al-Arabi, particularly those bearing on the ‘Unity of Being’ [*vahdet-i vücud*], pantheism to the *Kadıızadeli*s; ... also denounced the immortality of Prophet Hızr and the reference to Islam as the religion of Abraham”¹⁴⁵. For them, Ibn Al-Arabi was the Lydian stone by which orthodoxy was to be judged. The Sufis’ ‘Great *Şeyh*’ (*Şeyh-i Ekber*) was the *Kadıızadeli*s’ ‘Worst *Şeyh*’ (*Şeyh-i Ekfer*). “The readers of Ibn al-Arabi, they said, endangered Islam no less than did pilgrims to tombs, who prayed to dead mortals for divine intercession”¹⁴⁶. This clearly shows that despite his physical death four centuries earlier, Ibn Arabi, representing the theophilosophy of *vahdet-i vücud*, was very much alive in the Ottoman psyche. The *Kadıızadeli*s’ religious postures, particularly on matters of singing, chanting and dancing in the rituals, put them in confrontation not only with great *tasavvuf* masters, like Celaleddin Rumi, but even with renowned Arab Sunni masters, above all, Ghazali¹⁴⁷. The *Kadıızadeli*s challenged doctrine as well as practices. On the whole, the *Kadıızadeli* movement was a peculiar anti-Roman phenomenon within and not without Romanity. For example, concerning their doctrinal relations to the teaching of Ibn Taymiyya as such:

even if the *Kadıızadeli*s were more familiar with Ibn Taymiyya than they let on, the evidence at hand does not support the view that they represented on the whole a “school of Ibn Taymiyya” or even a distinctively “Taymiyyan” subcurrent of Hanafi-Maturidi Islam in the lands of Rum. Neither is it possible to say that they played an especially significant role in spreading the knowledge of Ibn Taymiyya’s *al-Siyāsa al-shar‘iyya* in the eleventh/seventeenth century¹⁴⁸.

¹⁴⁴ Zilfi 1988, 136-7.

¹⁴⁵ Zilfi 1988, 136.

¹⁴⁶ Zilfi 1988, 136.

¹⁴⁷ Zilfi 1988, 191.

¹⁴⁸ Terzioğlu 2020, 135-136.

The *Kadıızadelis* never became socially rooted or managed to find an institutional niche in the *İlmiyye* in a permanently significant way, because their moral philosophy was inimical to the normative structures and worldview of Ottoman state and society¹⁴⁹. The *Kadıızadelis*, who were primarily recruited among the Friday *vaizan* ('preachers'), were "not *ulema* as the Ottomans used the term. ... Except for a small group of imperial *vaizan*, *vaizan* as a whole were less educated, less compensated members of the dead-end-subhierarchy that ranged below the *ilmiye* as such"¹⁵⁰. Within the *ulema* hierarchy, the *Kadıızadeli* movement found sympathy and allies primarily in the lower *ulema*. We may note that the 16th-century Ottoman scholar and bureaucrat, Mustafa 'Âlî (1541-1600 AD) classified the Ottoman *ulema* in three categories:

- a. The upper or great *ulema*, "who are able to distinguish all degrees of truth and quality, though they have the tendency to avoid admitting the virtues of others.
- b. The middle range of *ulema*, who will not admit new truths for fear of demeaning their position.
- c. The lowest group, fundamentalists who hold so firmly to the words of the oldest authorities that they refuse to consider that new insights or new works are possible"¹⁵¹. Ali characterizes the members of this lower group as "infamous Turks" (*Türkân-ı bednâm*)¹⁵².

Consistently supporting Akbarian religiosity, the dominant upper echelons of the *İlmiyye* managed to counter the *Kadıızadelis*' claims canonically. As Zilfi states, "[a]lthough there were prominent *ulema* among the *Kadıızadelis* just as were *ulema* among the Sufis, the *ulema* of the highest *ilmiye* ranks continued to represent the empire's Sufi-leavened theological center"¹⁵³.

The temporary *Kadıızadeli* rise was based on the adversity of contemporary social conditions (large scale banditry, militarization of the countryside, lawlessness, personal physical and economic insecurity, challenges to central authority by local elements, etc) that extended the quest for obedience and authority towards extremes, on the part both of the *ulema* and the population. Zilfi also tells us that basically the *Kadıızadeli* movement came out of the antagonisms between the regularly recruited Friday *vaizan*

¹⁴⁹ Zilfi 1988, 192.

¹⁵⁰ Zilfi 1986b., 2498.

¹⁵¹ Fleischer 1986, 259.

¹⁵² Fleischer 1986, 260.

¹⁵³ Zilfi 1986b., 2500.

and their Sufi competitors¹⁵⁴. The *Kadızadeli* movement as a whole was a failure. “The *Kadızadeli*s were always a small minority within the population. Their strength lay in a strident offensive rather than in numbers. Even at the peak of the *Kadızadeli* influence, the popularity of the established Sufi orders showed few signs of abating”¹⁵⁵. People consistently preferred Sufi mosque preachers to *Kadızadeli* ones. Within the light of our discussion, it would be wrong to conceptualize the *Kadızadeli* – Sufi conflict as one between the Ottoman *medrese* as such and Sufism. As Yılmaz argues, it must be evaluated as a provocation against the *Şeyhs* by a group of opportunistic (“quick-witted”) - if not avaricious - preachers. “*Kadızadeli* efforts to seize the spiritual and moral initiative in Ottoman society were only temporarily and sporadically successful. In the end, their austere ethic proved impossible to implement. Sufi sensibilities were too profoundly a part of society to be easily suppressed, and the empire itself had been founded on confessional diversity”¹⁵⁶.

Necdet Yılmaz’s detailed and important study of 17th-century Anatolian *tasavvuf*, Ottoman state and *ulema* provides us with an overview of this century, in which the Ottoman state came under substantial political, military, social and epistemological pressure. Despite these difficulties, Yılmaz characterises the century as a golden era as far as culture, poetry, music, and literature were concerned. Yılmaz’s study focuses on Anatolia, and the following picture emerges:

- *Tasavvuf*, which functioned as the “yeast” both in the dough of the establishment of the Ottoman state, and in the formation of Ottoman society, was vigorous and dynamic in the 17th century. Both in terms of quantity and of quality, the *tekkes*, one of the three religious institutions (mosque, *medrese*, *tekke*), reached their zenith in this period.
- The thought system of Ibn Arabi, which was accepted by almost all *tarikats* members, formed an important ‘colour’ of the Ottoman *tasavvuf* of the time.
- The *Şeyhs* mixed with the people, penetrated all areas of Ottoman society, and formed the mentality of the Ottoman public¹⁵⁷. *Şeyhs* who served as official imams and preachers (*vaiz*) educated the people on worldly and ‘mystical’ matters. In general, whether in large or

¹⁵⁴ Zilfi 1986b., 2499.

¹⁵⁵ Zilfi 1988, 189.

¹⁵⁶ Zilfi 1986, 269.

¹⁵⁷ Yılmaz 2001, 461.

small mosques, the sermons were delivered by *tasavvuf* experts¹⁵⁸. They were also heavily involved in solving people's everyday problems.

- The most widespread and effective *tarikât* was the *Halvetiyye*. At this point, we need to point out here that *Halvetiyye* can be seen as “a *tarikât* womb”, because of the plethora of different *tarikats* that were derived from it. The Mevlevis were among the most widespread *tarikats* in Anatolia. Having entered the everyday life of the Ottoman capital, the *Mevleviyye* became a dominant element in that way of life. The Ankara-centred *Bayramiyye tarikât* was among the most widespread *tarikats* as well. Through its *Melâmiyye* (*Melâmiyye-i Bayramiye*) and *Himmetiyye* branches, it spread its influence to Istanbul as well. Until the first half of the 18th century, the Ottoman *Nakşibendiyye* was sustained in the form of the *vahdet-i vücud*-based *Ahrârîyye* branch. This Rumelian-Anatolian form of the *Nakşibendiyye* was established by Molla Îlâhî (d. 1491 AD) and his disciples¹⁵⁹. After the mid-18th century, through the influence of *Şeyh Murad Efendi*, it gradually came to be dominated by the (non-*vahdet-i vücüd*) *Müceddidiyye* branch. The *Bektashis* were also represented in many Anatolian towns and Istanbul. It is interesting to note that speaking about the *Bektashis* of the time, the 17th-century traveller Evliyâ Çelebi says they were not heterodox (*bî-şer*) but Sunni¹⁶⁰.
- The centre of *tasavvuf* activity was Istanbul, followed by Bursa, Konya, Amasya, Kastamonu, Antalya, Diyarbakır, and Manisa.
- The extremely close and heart-felt relations between the Sufis and the Ottoman Sultan and state officials continued as in the previous centuries. Similar to the acceptance and love for them by all sections of society, the state officials exhibited genuine religious respect and support for the *Şeyhs*. The Sultans visited and conversed with them, invited them to the palace, heard their sermons and heeded their advice, particularly on legal matters pertaining to justice and just rule. State officials established *tekkes* and *vakfs*, exempted Sufis from taxation, and paid them regular salaries from the treasury.
- As in the previous centuries, a number of *Şeyhs*, seen usually as politically dangerous, were exiled or executed. Of the executed, three in total, one was *Bayrami*, another was *Melamiyye-i Bayrami*, and

¹⁵⁸ Yılmaz 2001, 463.

¹⁵⁹ Öngören 2000, 117.

¹⁶⁰ Yılmaz 2001, 413.

the third was *Nakşibendi*. There was a fourth person, but there are doubts as to whether he was a *Şeyh* at all. It is interesting to note that the *tarikât* membership of the executed does not fall into a pattern of orthodoxy vs. heterodoxy, since it includes a member of the *Nakşibendis*, who were usually depicted as extremely orthodox.

- About one-fourth of the active *Şeyhs* examined (388 in total) were qualified in the exoteric sciences (*medrese*-educated). These particular ones made contributions (in the form of compilations) to *medrese*-related subjects, such as legal science (*fikh*), *tefsir* (Koranic exegesis), etc. About one tenth of these same *Şeyhs* were appointed to official positions like director of *medrese*, *kadı*, mufti, and even *Şeyhülislâm*. Thus, in this period too the relations between *ulema* and Sufis were generally harmonious. Many *ulema* of the period belonged to Sufi orders¹⁶¹.
- The value the *Şeyhs* attached to knowledge, both exoteric and esoteric, was the reason the *ulema* were very close to them. The *Şeyhülislâms* of the 17th century had been initiated by a *Şeyh* or were fully respectful of the Sufis.
- There were important developments and activity in the arts (music, poetry, etc) made by people involved in *tasavvuf*.
- There were a large number of treatises and works written pertaining to *vahdet-i vücud*, *zîkr*, *sema*, *devrân*, etc. The two *tasavvuf* books most often translated and provided with commentaries were Ibn Arabî's *Fusûsü'l-Hikem*, and Rumi's *Mesnevî*. The most difficult subjects of *tasavvuf* theosophy were popularised and appropriated by the Ottoman people by way of poetry¹⁶².

As far as inter-religious relations are concerned, Eunjeong Yi gives us a picture of significant Christian demographic movement into the Greater Istanbul area: "It seems that the non-Muslim population went through a sizeable increase over the 150 years leading into the late 17th century, at which time it probably accounted for a half or even more of the population of the Greater Istanbul area"¹⁶³. This is most important for, as we discuss elsewhere, Roman Christianity and Roman Islam constituted communicating vessels safeguarding the living existence of Romanity. As Yi writes:

¹⁶¹ Zilfi 1986, 269.

¹⁶² Yılmaz 2001, 475-9 (except when otherwise stated).

¹⁶³ Yi 2019, 117 and 131.

All of the above observations leave us with a very incomplete and ambivalent picture of interreligious relations. Population changes clearly exacerbated tensions, but this was not the whole story. There were reasons why non-Muslim immigrants were tacitly welcomed, at least by some urban institutions - such as *mahalles*... janissary regiments... and any employer who wanted cheap unskilled labourers. What is clear, however, is the complex nature of interreligious relations, especially given the existence of many converts from Christianity, and that blood ties often survived the conversion of some family members¹⁶⁴.

The early 18th-century Ottoman Religious Scene: A Changing Stability

The Ottoman turn towards Sunnism took place in such a way that the predominant Ottoman religious-philosophical understanding remained constantly tied to Ibn Arabi/Rumi/Hacı Bektaş and the *vahdet-i vücud*. It is from within this familiar and natural Ottoman standpoint that the sultans began the search for a solution to a problem of a modern-science-related deficit conspicuous in the early 18th century. The second pre-eminently Aristotelian sultan after Fatih Sultan Mehmed, Ahmed III (r. 1703 – 1730 AD) and his famous vizier, Nevşehirli Damad İbrahim Paşa, both very favourable to sciences, began to reintroduce and reinterpret Aristotle in the 18th-century setting. Bayrakdar claims that “[t]his [happened] for two reasons: a. in order to closely approach Aristotle directly through European researchers, who had been discovered thanks to the first contact in this century between the culture of Europe and the culture of the Ottoman Empire; and b. in order to seek in different systems of thought, including that of Aristotle, a means to renovate the cultural and scientific grandeur of the Empire in decline”¹⁶⁵. Although Bayrakdar is right on the centrality of Aristotle in the renovation attempts of the period, he is wrong in assigning Aristotle a ‘Western European’ quality in the sense that his work was portrayed as a ‘foreign’ thought system to that of the Ottomans, and in assigning to Western European influences an unwarranted importance for the period under discussion.

If we look at the translation efforts of the period, we will see that all the relevant works concerned ‘domestic’ standpoints whose existence and/or origins can be found in the Roman Ottoman or Eastern lands. For example, relatively recently, Karlığa pointed to an early 18th-century translation of the fourth part of Şehrezûri (d. 1298 AD)’s physics book, *eş-Seçeretü’l-*

¹⁶⁴ Yi 2019, 137-138, emphasis added.

¹⁶⁵ Bayrakdar 1986, 193.

İlahiyye, by Yirmisekiz Mehmed *Çelebi*, effected probably either between 1706 and 1710, or between 1713 and 1716 AD¹⁶⁶. This translation was most probably the reason for which Mehmed *Çelebi* attracted the attention of the Palace and was subsequently included in the delegation for the signing of the Treaty of Pasarofça. Moreover, the official translation commission which Damad İbrahim Paşa set up translated four works in all. Three of them were primarily historical in nature, while the fourth was a translation and commentary on Aristotle's *Physica*. The translator was Esad b. Ali b. Osman El-Yanyâvî (d. 1736), and the translation (*el-Ta'lim el-Sâlis*), which was directly from Greek into Arabic, utilised the commentary of Ioannis Kuttinius of Karaferia/Veroia (d. 1658). In the Introduction, Yanyalı Esad Efendi mentions famous Western commentators of Aristotle such as Albertus Magnus, Duns Scotus Erigena, and Thomas Aquinas, yet he preferred the commentaries of Ibn Rusd, Farabi and Ibn Sina¹⁶⁷. He specifically praised Aristotle by saying that if it was not for him, it would not have been possible for the science of physics to have emerged¹⁶⁸. Yanyalı Esad Efendi originated from Yanya (Ioannina in present-day Greece) in south Epirus, an area under heavy Bektashi influence¹⁶⁹. His religious works, among them his *er-Risâletü'l – lâhûtiyye*, commissioned by and dedicated to *Şeyhülislâm* Mîrzâ Mustâfa Efendi (d. 1722), support central Akbarian theophilosophical principles and understandings¹⁷⁰. From what we can see from the translation efforts, although certainly the Ottomans seem to be more 'open' to international influences, it is not clear at all that these were primarily Western European. In the period under discussion, it is very difficult to talk about Westernisation as such.

"Not all who were disenchanted with institutionalized sufism turned Kadızadeli; others embraced an increasingly Sunnified Melamism [(in the form of the rising *Hamzaviyye*)], while representatives of institutionalized orders such as the Halvetis, Celvetis, Nakşbendis and Mevlevîs also continued to attract adherents among the urban public"¹⁷¹. The early 18th-century *Şeyhülislâm* Paşmakçızâde Seyyid Ali Efendi (1639 - 1712), and

¹⁶⁶ Kazancıgil 2000, 199. Kazancıgil quotes Karlığa, Bekir 1999, *Yirmisekiz Mehmed Çelebi'nin Yeni Bulunan Bir Fizik Kitabı Tercümesi ve On Sekizinci Yüzyılın Başında Osmanlı Düşüncesi* [The Translation of A Recently Found Physics Book by Yirmisekiz Mehmed Çelebi and Ottoman Thought at the Beginning of the 18th Century], *Bilim Felsefe Tarih-I*, İstanbul.

¹⁶⁷ Kayaoğlu 1998, 34.

¹⁶⁸ Kazancıgil 2000, 201.

¹⁶⁹ The *Bektaşîs* were the most influential sect also in Albania and Crete.

¹⁷⁰ Sarıkavak 1997, 123 – 134.

¹⁷¹ Terzioğlu 2013, 99.

the *Sadrazam* ('Grand Vizier') Şehîd Ali Paşa (d. 1719) were *Melami Kutbs*. As far as the *Melamiyye* hierarchy is concerned, a *Melami Kutb* is ('pole', 'axis')) is the person invested with central authority in the *tarikât*¹⁷² - as we will see later this *tarikât* played a key role in the development of Kemalism. Şeyhülislâm Paşmakçızâde Seyyid Ali Efendi served altogether about five years of the 27-year period of the office of Şeyhülislâm in the reign of Sultan Ahmed III. The longest serving Şeyhülislâm of that time was Yenişehirli Abdullah Efendi (d. 1743 AD), who held the post from May 1718 until September 1730 AD. He was favourable to innovation. In 1727 AD he issued a *fetva* that allowed the establishment of a printing press and the printing of non-religious works in the Ottoman lands and helped Ibrahim Müteferrika in the setting up of his printing press¹⁷³.

After the Ottoman-Persian war in the 1730s, during the reception of a Persian delegation in Istanbul, the Ottoman officials used references to Ibn Arabi as reasons for the legitimation of their claims. "From this diplomatic document [relating to that meeting] we may observe that two centuries after the construction of the tomb of Ibn 'Arabî, the men of state and the educated Ottomans continued their veneration of Ibn 'Arabî and considered themselves distinguished in some way by the Akbarian predictions concerning them"¹⁷⁴. Moreover, we must note here that apart from the names *Konstantiniyye* or Istanbul, in the 18th century the Ottomans commonly referred to their capital as "*Âsitâne* meaning 'Central *Tekye*', *Dergâh-ı Muallâ* (Sublime *Tekye*), and *Dersaâdet* ('Land of Peace')"¹⁷⁵. Metaphorically speaking, from the conquest onwards until the end of the Empire, the 'Sufis' "... turned [Istanbul] into a giant *dergâh* [by establishing the various *tekkes*]. The fact that [almost] every corner, every street and every neighbourhood was named later after these great personalities ... clearly shows how '*Tasavvuf*' and 'the City's' space were interwoven with each other"¹⁷⁶. Even the Sultan's Palace was called "*Dergâh-ı âlî*"¹⁷⁷.

Apart from the fact that in the Arab world Ibn Arabian-type religiosity as well as Ibn Arabi himself have "never been publicly accepted as mainstream in the manner that was possible in Turkey"¹⁷⁸, the separation between Arab and Ottoman/Turkish Sunni understandings of Islam evolved in another way. Even during the centuries of Sunnisation, the 'cultural'

¹⁷² Holbrook 1993, 19 and 31.

¹⁷³ Altunsu 1972, 118.

¹⁷⁴ Tahralı 1999, 48.

¹⁷⁵ Kılıç 1999, 13.

¹⁷⁶ Kılıç 1997, 259-60.

¹⁷⁷ Noyan (Dedebaba) 2002, 13.

¹⁷⁸ Hirtenstein 1999, 243.

distance between Roman Ottoman *ulema* as a whole and Arabic-speaking religious scholars was conspicuous.

[V]ery few primarily Arabic-speaking persons participated in the ruling elite of the Empire. Perhaps two or three individuals of Arab ethnic background served as grand vizier and, by one estimate, for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, no more than three or four percent of the official religious-legal hierarchy, the *ulama*, were of Arab background. Arabic literary sources by the eighteenth century distinguished the practices and values of the imperial capital from those of the Arab provinces...¹⁷⁹.

During the 19th century, in which Ottoman Islam turned into Islamism and gradual Westernisation took place, the tradition of non-admittance of Arab-speaking persons to the Ottoman elite would end.

The Pre-mid-18th century Roman Ottoman State-Religion Relations

As explained in Chapter 1, the doctrinal precept of *vahdet-i vücud* underlies the core Ottoman religio-political concept of *Nizam-ı Âlem* (*The Order of the Universe*), which defined the Ottoman view of the world. It represents a concept commensurable with the Roman Christian *Taxis*. The *Nizam-ı Âlem* worldview was so widespread among the Ottoman administrators (*ümera*) and *ulema* that in the relevant documents and works it was not even explicitly defined, its meaning being taken for granted. In other words, it holds the position of an Ottoman ideal or, to use Piscatori's terminology, an Ottoman 'implicit ideology'¹⁸⁰. Early scholarly research, which had focused more on instrumentality and the historical, suggested that this concept was basically used to promote and justify the Ottoman worldview as expansion and conquest. According to this circumscribed view, it was merely synonymous with a politically-derived notion of 'the unity/order of the state' aiming at the creation of a universal order and domination¹⁸¹. Yet this represents an incomplete, if not distorted, picture. In his exposition of the concept through the examination of relevant works of a number of the key Ottoman scholars in different centuries, Görgün has aptly shown that, although the principle of 'the unity/order of the state' is part of and indeed constitutes a pre-condition for the establishment of the

¹⁷⁹ Barbir 1996, 102-3.

¹⁸⁰ From my various personal discussions with Professor James Piscatori.

¹⁸¹ For a discussion of *Nizam-ı Âlem* as a political concept, and Ottoman political thought in general, see Yılmaz 2000.

Nizam-ı Âlem, the concept essentially represents a doctrinally-related unitarian world-view embedded in Islamic theosophy¹⁸².

In the Ottoman understanding, the concept of *Nizam-ı Âlem* is ultimately related to *tasavvuf*¹⁸³. The key components of the Ottoman conception of *Nizam-ı Âlem* found in Görgün's analysis of it¹⁸⁴, can indeed be seen in the *vahdet-i vücud* as we have already discussed them. The meaning of *âlem* found in the term is not merely confined to the physical world but stipulates the whole existence in a differentiated unity between esoteric (*âlem-i bâtin*), which represents the intelligible and, above all, the hidden spiritual that relates to uncreated *Supraness* and exoteric (*âlem-i zâhir*), which represents the bodily as well as social life. The latter 'bodily' as also the common social is a very important parameter, since in Roman Christianity too, the social as a whole is associated with the bodily. Indeed, the Orthodox Church, which is equated with Roman Christian society as the community of believers, is conceptualized as 'the Body of Christ *Logos-Word*'. Ibn Arabi states: "treat everyone equally, whether they are kings or paupers, old and young. Know that humanity is one body, and individuals are its members. A body is not a whole without its parts"¹⁸⁵. Although the notion of the 'Body of Christ' exists in Frankish Christian understanding, it is within the overall theophilosophical commensurability between Roman Christianity and Akbarian Islam that their notions of the body as the social is seen as commensurable with each other.

Thus, physics as the apparent and the visible, and, metaphysics as the hereafter, are seen as constituting one single reality unified in an unconfused manner. In more exact doctrinal terms, we have on the one hand, the physical (bodily) and the metaphysical (intelligible, 'super-physical), and, on the other hand, what is *supra* both, the *Supra*-physical of Uncreation. The overall Order owes its unitary being to its single source, the uncreated Divine *Hakikat*. At the same time within this unity there are also defined partially inter-penetrating 'levels' of Existence that retain their distinct natures even after unification, which fulfils those particular natures. The realisation of the Order as the enactment of perfect harmony in the exoteric and esoteric universe is dependent on man as a microcosm in following the Koran and fulfilling the *şeriat*. The creation and existence of the Islamic society as such in the understanding of *Nizam-ı Âlem* is dependent upon the

¹⁸² Görgün 2000, 180 – 188.

¹⁸³ Görgün 2000, 182.

¹⁸⁴ It should be noted that Görgün's analysis primarily focuses on the examination of the concept as such, and only secondarily on its relation to religious doctrine.

¹⁸⁵ Ibn Arabi 1997, 266

word (*kelime*, or *kelam*), i.e., upon the reason-based sciences¹⁸⁶. Yet because Islam addresses both the present and the hereafter as one unified reality, the meaning of the *şeriat* in Ottoman *fikh* - and indeed the understanding of all existents¹⁸⁷ -, is not exhausted in the literal and the reason-based sciences (“it does not come from books”) but is essentially co-related with *life* itself¹⁸⁸, the source of which is the ‘hidden’ Divine (*Hakikat*). As we have seen in Chapter 1, in *tasavvuf* the divine name ‘life’ rules over all others. In this understanding, the Koran, which is the source of and provides a blueprint for realizing the *Nizam-ı Âlem*, is seen as a living text, the meaning of which needs to be discovered both exoterically and esoterically. The overall religious theophilososophical ethic that is generated and portrayed here is essentially a life-following one – which is totally commensurable with that found in Orthodox Christianity - as opposed to a merely literalist and rule-based ethic. The Ottoman *Nizam-ı Âlem* conception stipulates the need for a harmonious synergy between the Ottoman *ümmera*, responsible for the ‘worldly’ space, and the *ulema*, responsible for the religious space pertaining to sciences, in order to bring about *the Ordering of the Universe* within an overall religious environment. In the Ottoman context, both the Sultans and administrators, as well as the *ulema*, were educated in, and propagated, the concept of *Nizam-ı Âlem*.

One of the most famous Ottoman moral thinkers of all time was Kınalızâde Âli Efendi (1510-1572 AD). His book, *Akhlâq-ı ‘alâ’î*, became a standard textbook for centuries. Oktay summarises some of its main points as follows:

In the words of Kınalızâde, ‘the Circle of Justice/Equity (*Daire-i Adliye*) is the ordering of the universe’. This can also be called the Byzantine Taxis. ‘Because *Justice is fed by the divine source*, both *the order of the world* and *the order of the heavens* exist thanks to justice, and as long as there is justice they will continue to exist’. According to our moralist, *justice and order are attached to one another and can be seen as Siamese twins. Each of them becomes meaningful through the other*” [emphasis ours]¹⁸⁹. Moreover, *adalet* coupled with the Ottoman-Islamic concept of *istimâlet* (lit. ‘a trying to persuade, a gaining of goodwill’) “makes us remember perforce the meaning of [the Roman Christian notion of] *oikonomia*. As is known, *istimâlet* means mildness, flexibility and the consent of the other party. From

¹⁸⁶ Görgün 2000, 186.

¹⁸⁷ Görgün 2000, 185.

¹⁸⁸ Görgün 2000, 187.

¹⁸⁹ Oktay 2001, 33.

the point of view of the administrators, a policy of *istimâlet* requires one to follow the road of the least bad and gentlest solution¹⁹⁰.

In this conception, the notion of the Perfect Man as the Microcosm reflecting the whole universe, and as the Mediator through whom God reveals Himself is crucial, since it entails the necessary mutual encapsulation and synergy between the Divine and the Human. The Perfect Man as a reflection of the ‘Muhammadan Reality’, or *Logos-logoi* (*Names/Attribute-attributes*), brings the whole universe into order in a manner that reflects the perfection of the Divine ordering. As such the *Nizâm-ı Âlem* and *Adalet* are fulfilled. In religio-political terms, the real source of religious/political authority within the *vahdet-i vücud* is ultimately the ‘Muhammadan Reality’, or *Logos*. The apparent holders of power, including the Caliph, are seen as only substitutes for the Pole – which can be a woman -, who holds *auctoritas* by delegation from the ever-living prophet, Idris, who in turn is himself but a substitute of the *Hakikat Muhammadiyya*, the *Muhammadan Reality*¹⁹¹. As we have discussed above, it is the upper part of the *Logos-Name* (‘*the Muhammadan Reality*’), which pertains to the Divine in itself (*the Hakikat*), that underlies and provides all exoteric parts of *the Ordering of the Universe* with its single esoteric unifying source. In this sense, the love and heart-relating *tasavvuf* becomes the inescapable element of the various spheres of Ottoman life.

From our present discussion emerges a model of state-religion relations which prescribes the notion of a doctrinally-inspired harmony between the religious and the worldly within an overall religious environment. The exoteric space(s) need both to be fulfilled according to their ‘natures’ (i.e., their *logoi* as the divine purposes for their creation), and harmoniously united with one another in an unconfused manner. The role of *tasavvuf* as the ‘science’ of the esoteric was all-pervasive in envisaging and performing the overall unification. There were two exoteric spaces: one pertaining to the worldly state and its laws (the reason-based *kanun*), and one defined by the religious hierarchy, the *İlmiyye*, and the relevant sciences and structures (*fıkh*, philosophy, *kelam*, *medrese*). These two spaces were doctrinally envisaged as complementary to each other and as originating from a single Perfect source. In the Ottoman ideal world-view, as expressed by Mustafa ‘Âlî in the late 16th century - almost a century after the gradual establishment of a fully state-related *İlmiyye/Şeyhülislâmlık* -, these two modes of being

¹⁹⁰ Oktay 2001, 32. For a study on the instrumental value of *istimâlet*, see, Lowry, Heath W. 2002, *Fifteenth Century Ottoman Realities: Christian Peasant Life on the Aegean Island of Limnos*, Eren Yayınları, Istanbul.

¹⁹¹ Chodkiewicz 1993b., 194.

“were compatible and complementary; political figures were learned or interested in learning, scholars were given governmental functions, and all Ottomans met in the spheres of letters, poetry, and in the Sufi cloister, all of them fundamental parts of the emergent Ottoman-Islamic cultural synthesis”¹⁹². We have indeed seen the centrality of Ottoman poetry in propagating the theophilosophy of *vahdet-i vücud*. “The ideal Ottoman, like the sultan, should combine the two orientations”¹⁹³. As Fleischer further states, the ideal Ottoman ruler “had to combine within himself the political sagacity and worldly wisdom of an administrator, the humanism and learning of the scholar, and the spiritual understanding and breadth of mind of the mystic or philosopher. In short, he had to approximate the Perfect Man, who could operate in all spheres of life”¹⁹⁴. As we have seen, almost all Ottoman sultans and high state officials either belonged or were extremely close to a *Şeyh* and a *tarikât*; in practice, they usually belonged to multiple *tarikats* and had very close spiritual relations with various *Şeyhs*. Although it is not clear whether Fleischer consciously uses the term ‘the Perfect Man’ in this sense, his description of the ideal Ottoman Sultan is indeed fully in line with the concept of the Perfect Human Being as a reflection of the Muhammadan Reality or *Logos-Name*.

The conceptualization of two exoteric spaces in a differentiated and unconfused unity stemming from Ottoman religiosity was doctrinally possible and prescribed by the theophilosophy of *vahdet-i vücud*. On the one hand, the worldly space represented by the Sultan and the bureaucratic officials, and the *kanun* as the expression of worldly justice, was underlined by the spiritual education and relation of those persons to *tasavvuf*, and by the concept of *istimâlet*, which as the expression of divine love also pertained to *tasavvuf*. On the other hand, the exoteric religious law, the *şeriat*, and the other exoteric sciences both possessed a full validity in themselves and also found their full meaning and unity through *tasavvuf*. *İstimâlet* is pivotal to the application of *şeriat* as well. In this scheme, the exoteric spaces are doctrinally understood as being in harmonious unity with each other. This type of state-religion relations is commensurable with the Roman ‘Byzantine’ *sinallilia*.

“Ottoman intellectuals rationalised the system [of state-religion relations] by appealing to philosophical principles to show that the Holy Law could not be maintained without the strong central authority. The classical expression of this rationalization is the Circle of Equity [*Daire-i Adliye*], an ancient piece of political wisdom attributed to Aristotle (among

¹⁹² Fleischer 1986, 269.

¹⁹³ Fleischer 1986, 269.

¹⁹⁴ Fleischer 1986, 291.

others), which was systematized and Islamised by Davânî and his Ottoman adaptor Kınalızade:

There can be no royal authority without the military. There can be no military without wealth. The subjects produce wealth. Justice preserves the subjects' loyalty to the sovereign. Justice requires harmony in the world. The world is a garden, its walls are the state. The Holy Law orders the state. There is no support for the Holy Law except through royal authority"¹⁹⁵.

It is clear that the understanding of the internal relations of worldly and religious authority comprises a framework of inter-encapsulation and interpenetration of the two authorities, separate in nature, yet inseparable as a whole. As we saw above, both authorities were seen as proceeding from the same perfect source and so ideally co-harmonious. To paraphrase Fleischer's relation between *kanun* and *şariat*, which is a reflection of the Ottoman worldview, both the worldly and the religious are present, neither wholly distinct from each other nor wholly identical. Within this framework the quest for the ideal harmony in the world as an emanation and reflection of the Divine unity, captured in the term *sinallilia*, is ever-present.

The *sinallilia*-type of state-religion relations, in which the *kanun* and the *şariat* are seen in a differentiated unity by doctrinal prescription, are based on the presence of the triad *kanun-şariat-tasavvuf* within the theophosophy of *vahdet-i vücud*. The exoteric (*kanun-şariat*) are united by way of the esoteric (*tasavvuf*) in order to fulfil and bring about the ideal *Nizâm-ı Âlem* ('Ordering of the Universe') and *Adalet* ('Justice'). The role of *tasavvuf* in bringing about the differentiated unity/harmony-based *sinallilia* is not accidental. Indeed, there is a clear positive correlation between the presence and existence of *sinallilia*-type of state-religion relations and that of *tasavvuf*. On the one hand, according to Repp, "[t]he period of Ebüssu'ûd Efendi's working life largely coincided with the reign of Süleyman, which, as has been remarked, was the period of the closest accommodation between the *şariat* and *kanun*. That was so due in great measure not only to Ebüssu'ûd, who was the Müfti of Istanbul for an unprecedented thirty years, from 1545 till his death in 1574, but also to Ibn Kemâl, or Kemalpaşazade, Müfti from 1525-6 till his death in 1534. The seventeenth-century biographer, Atâ'î (d. 1064/1635), bears witness to their efforts, writing:

¹⁹⁵ Fleischer 1986, 262.

Truly the effects of their *ijtihād* were the harmonizing of the Ottoman kanuns with the noble *şeriat* and the ordering of religious and state affairs on the best possible basis”¹⁹⁶.

On the other hand, the basis of a doctrinally-derived harmonization of *şeriat* and *kanun* was provided by *tasavvuf* and the *vahdet-i vücud*. We have already discussed the intimate spiritual relation between Kanuni Sultan Süleyman and *tasavvuf* and the *Şeyhs*. Repp states that Süleyman was himself an active partner in the attempts to harmonize *kanun* and *şeriat*, and that it would be wrong to suppose that his sole interest was centred on the *kanun*¹⁹⁷ - we will witness an identical behaviour by Atatürk himself within a harmonisation effort between the religious and the worldly in modernity. Kanuni Sultan Süleyman actively participated in issues and difficulties that lay within the sphere of *şeriat*. The same biographer, Atâ’î, tells us that *Şeyhülislâm* Ebüssü’üd Efendi argued that “the thing that the Sufis of Islam call the reality (*hakikat*) and the way (*tarikât*) is the essence and the summary of the law (*şeriat*)”¹⁹⁸. Similarly, in his *Risâletü’l-münîre*, which is understood to have been written just before he became a disciple of *Şeyh İbrâhim Gülşenî*, *Şeyhülislâm* Ibn Kemal treats the issues of *şeriat*, *kelam*, and *tasavvuf* in a unified manner. “When this work, which considers the various issues, is examined in detail, it is possible to see clearly the synthesis of *tasavvuf*, *kelam* and *fıkıh*”¹⁹⁹. From Ibn Kemal’s discussion it is understood that he is addressing a milieu in which Sufi values and levels of perfection are seen as the norm and as representing the highest possible ideals. In this vein, he warns that there can be no discussion about the attainment of sainthood (*velâyet*) or power of sanctity by which miracles can be worked (*keramet*) for those who do not know the *şeriat* both exoterically and esoterically²⁰⁰. Similarly, the *Şeyhs* who learned the sciences of the *şeriat* and *tarikât* together laid the ground for a coherent unified exoteric (*şeriat*) and esoteric (*tarikât*) balance in that period and understood the two institutions/sciences as mutually fulfilled²⁰¹. It was the *Şeyhs* who conformed to this type of Sufi that were normally appointed to positions in state religious institutions as well as foundations (mosques, *vakıfs*, *zaviyes*, etc). To summarise, as Öngören states, the typical Ottoman *ilmiyye* dignitary was the *alim* (Islamic learned scholars)-sufi, representing

¹⁹⁶ Repp 1998, 134.

¹⁹⁷ Repp 1988, 135.

¹⁹⁸ Atâ’î, *Zeyl-i Şekâik*, cited in Öngören 2000b., 349-50.

¹⁹⁹ Öngören 2000b., 37.

²⁰⁰ Ibn Kemal, *Risâletü’l-münîre*, cited in Öngören 2000b., 359.

²⁰¹ Öngören 2000b., 340.

“the exotericity- esotericity balance, whose foundations were laid in the period of the establishment of the Ottoman state”²⁰².

On the other hand, the reverse correlation can be observed. The periods where the *sinallilia*-type of state-religion relations are disturbed coincide with moments or periods in which Roman Ottoman *tasavvuf* was temporarily or more seriously challenged. An example of the former case is the tenure of *Şeyhülislâm* Çivizâde Muhyiddîn Efendi (d. 1547), and that of the latter, the Kadizâdeli challenge. As we have already seen, the primary reason for the dismissal of *Şeyhülislâm* Çivizâde Muhyiddîn Efendi was his opposition to cornerstone personalities of *vahdet-i vücud* in the Ottoman milieu, Ibn Arabi and Celaleddin Rumi. His anti-Sufi case was unique amongst 16th-century Ottoman *Şeyhülislâms*, and he was the first *Şeyhülislâm* to be dismissed. His rulings on various subjects conformed more to a purely legalistic and literalist interpretation based on an understanding of a fully autonomous and circumscribed *şeriat*. This tendency is expressed by his complying with the strongest legal authority and tradition. By contrast, the tendency of the highest pro-Sufi or Sufi-related Ottoman *ulema* was to follow an interpretation that would reconcile *kanun* and *şeriat*, more or less independently of purely legalistic concerns. In general, the Ottoman practice in legal interpretation was to follow a weak legal authority in order to bring about a harmonisation of *kanun* and *şeriat*²⁰³. In other words, they were striving for *sinallilia*.

As we have discussed, the source of this understanding was the Ottoman view of the Universe as a harmonious differentiated unity, and *kanun* and *şeriat* as proceeding from the same source (*Hak*) and seen as mutually fulfilling. Instrumentality, which also existed, did so within and not without this understanding – as modern Enlightenment-based purely instrumental reason would prescribe. This is particularly clear from the case of the Ottoman cash *vakf*, which was a central issue in the period under discussion. It is conspicuous that Sultan Süleyman’s interest lay primarily in the correct interpretation of *şeriat*. The opinion of the anti-Sufi *Şeyhülislâm* Çivizâde Muhyiddîn Efendi, which he based on the strongest possible legal authorities, was that the practice was not permissible. Repp states that the Sultan was briefly persuaded to accept this opinion on *şeriat* grounds, which seemed to contradict state interests²⁰⁴. Later *Şeyhülislâm* Ebüssu’ûd Efendi declared the practice legally valid, an opinion in which the *ulema* was united in opposing Çivizâde. What is of specific interest is that Sultan Süleyman accepted Ebüssu’ûd Efendi’s *sinallilia*-based interpretation primarily on

²⁰² Öngören 2000b., 340.

²⁰³ I would like to thank Dr Richard Repp for pointing this out to me.

²⁰⁴ Repp 1988, 135.

religious grounds. In his edict, he stated that he ordered the practice to be allowed since “it [was his] imperial custom and practice to advance the affairs of the faith and to strengthen the *true shar*”²⁰⁵. In his understanding, the *sinallilia*-based legal interpretation of Ebüssü’üd Efendi expressed the true *şeriat*. It is without question that this interpretation has instrumental functions as well. Indeed, the continuation of the practice of cash *vakfs* had practical positive effects for society and state on the whole, e.g., on mosque building, helping the poor, etc. Yet Sultan Süleyman would not have allowed it to be continued if it was deemed religiously impermissible. As we have seen above, he was particularly sensitive towards the *şeriat* and its interpretation, and he intervened even in apparently more detailed issues such as the problem of *mash ‘ala-khuffayn*, which was connected to the performance of ablutions. In her well-thought article, *Ibn Taymiyya, al-Siyāsa al-Shar‘iyya, and the Early Modern Ottomans*, Derin Terzioğlu writes:

The growing anxiety among the scholars of Rum about the compatibility of the Ottoman *kanūn* with the sharia during the first half of the tenth/sixteenth century prompted efforts on the part of the leading Ottoman jurists to try to address and reduce these points of tension. Some high-ranking jurists, like Çivizāde Muḥyī’-d-dīn Meḥmed (d. 954/1547), tried to accomplish this by undertaking a sustained critique of those Ottoman institutions and practices that they deemed problematic, such as cash *waqfs*, but met stiff resistance on the part of the Ottoman imperial establishment in this regard. Far more successful, in comparison, were the efforts of Kemālpāşazāde and Ebū’s-su’ūd (d. 982/1574), who tried to harmonize the *kanūn* with the sharia by working out a comprehensive legal framework for what had been until then ad hoc administrative and fiscal arrangements and by rearticulating the principles of the Ottoman land regime in the language of Islamic jurisprudence... Cöngī’s *Risāla fī l-Siyāsa al-shar‘iyya* (also known as *Siyāsetnāme*) was perhaps a more direct response to the challenges presented to the Ottoman officialdom by Syrian and Egyptian scholars, while ‘Āşīk Çelebi’s *Mi‘rāci’l-eyāle ve minhāci’l-adāle* was concerned more exclusively with the debates among the Ottoman Rumi elites²⁰⁶.

In his translation of Ibn Taymiyya’s *al-Siyāsa al-shar‘iyya*, ‘Āşīk Çelebi plainly renders the former in the service of the Roman Sunni *tasavvufi* Ottomans.

Differently from Ibn Taymiyya, ‘Āşīk tailored his discourse to a distinctly royal audience and devoted a good chunk of his introduction to the eulogy of the Ottoman rulers... The Ottomans are introduced as having inherited

²⁰⁵ Repp 1988, 140-141, emphasis ours.

²⁰⁶ Terzioğlu 2020, 111-112, emphasis added.

“the office of the caliphate and the protection of the seal of prophecy” (*emr-i hilâfet ve hıfz-ı hatm-i nübüvvet*). ‘Âşık was evoking here a Sufi-inflected definition of the caliphate and casting the Ottoman rulers as “caliphs of God,” who, like the first four caliphs, took their authority directly from God and who united in their person spiritual and temporal power. In clear contrast to Ibn Taymiyya, albeit in good company among his Ottoman contemporaries, ‘Âşık even attributes quasi-mystical qualities to the Ottoman rulers. The recently deceased Süleymân I is eulogized as a ruler who had “won with his sword not just the sultanate of this world but also the sultanate of the other world and in whose sainthood (*vilâyet*) and ability to perform marvels (*kerâmet*) the people have great faith.”... The emphasis on the Ottoman dynastic pedigree in ‘Âşık’s text also stands in contrast with the inconsequential place of the dynastic principle in Ibn Taymiyya’s original epistle as well as in Mamluk political culture at large²⁰⁷.

That comes naturally as the Ottoman religio-political ‘culture’ was Roman, Ecumenically Roman that is, following Alexander the Great, through Constantine the Great, to Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed.

Otherwise, however, ‘Âşık does not stress the Ottoman claim to be champions of Sunni Islam in his eulogy, or at least not as much as did some other contemporaries. In fact, he downplays the importance of religious motivations when extolling the Ottoman military victories in general. This is interesting, because the long-standing Ottoman claim to be *gâzîs*, waging war in the name of Islam, would have fit well into a Taymiyyan framework, in which jihad is one of the primary duties of a Muslim ruler²⁰⁸. Instead, ‘Âşık builds his narrative around the Ottoman quest for world dominion. This ideal arguably had its heyday somewhat earlier, in the first three to four decades of the tenth/sixteenth century, when the Ottomans were expanding rapidly, and is thought to have died a slow death thereafter... ‘Âşık stresses the continuing Ottoman claims to world dominion by hyperbolically writing of the Ottoman arrows reaching as far east as Eastern Turkistan (*Mâçîn*) and the Indus valley (*Sind*) and as far west as Rome. It is only at the end of a long list of victories and conquests that he signals the Ottoman championship of Islam with a reference to the (fancied) destruction of the “great church” in Rome²⁰⁹.

We have already referred to the unfinished 1481 bicephalous military campaign of Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed against the Mamluks and the Frankish Papists who illegitimately were occupying the See of Rome

²⁰⁷ Terzioğlu 2020, 121-122, emphasis added.

²⁰⁸ The statement is conditionally problematic for as we have seen *gaza* and jihad were not identical in the Ottoman contexts – at least in the formative years.

²⁰⁹ Terzioğlu 2020, 123-124.

since 1046 AD – although now, the declared (in practice) aim seems not to be restitution of Roman Christianity there.

I heard from trusted sources that [the Sultan Suleyman I *Kanuni*] repeatedly stated that he has the sole right over the Roman Empire and the whole West as the legal inheritor of Constantine [I the Great]²¹⁰.

The Ottoman *tasavvufi* unifying onto-cosmological differentiated unity of *kelam-fikh-kanun* can be clearly seen in the following:

‘Āşık’s eulogy of the Ottomans comes closer to the Taymiyyan line when he praises the Ottomans for their devotion to justice and the sharia. Even here, however, there is an important difference between the two writers. Whereas Ibn Taymiyya categorically rejects the possibility of justice outside the bounds of the sharia, ‘Āşık does not. Rather, he uses Sufi metaphors, as he eulogizes the Ottoman rulers for being the “meeting place of the two seas” (*mecma’ü’lbahreyn*) and for uniting the “two lights” of justice and sharia. He also praises them for having issued “well-respected *kānuns* like the *resm-i Osmânî*.” All this indicates that, like the Arab jurists of the tenth/sixteenth century, ‘Āşık saw the Ottoman *kānūn* as representing a form of justice beyond the sharia, but he differed from them in that he saw this in a positive light²¹¹.

‘Āşık’s criticisms that follow in his treatise is more towards application rather than towards fundamentals. Ultimately, “‘Āşık’s “constitutional” views (his endorsement of a realm of justice beyond the sharia, and his more mystical conception of royal authority) were more “Ottoman” than “Taymiyyan”²¹²”. Or else, it was more Roman than Arabic. Thus, as far as the issue of the reception and incorporation of Ibn Taymiyyan elements in the Roman Ottoman religious worldview, the situation bears somewhat a resemblance to the reception and incorporation of Augustinian elements in the Roman Christian worldview²¹³, i.e., eclectic, sporadic and sieved out – considering that nine out of ten core dogmatic

²¹⁰ Paolo Giovio. *Commentario de le cose de’ Turchi* (1532) (Özbaran 2004, 122, quoting from the Turkish translation of Fleischer 1986).

²¹¹ Terzioğlu 2020, 124.

²¹² Terzioğlu 2020, 130. We are saddened to see that in her otherwise most informing article, Terzioğlu distortingly applies the characterisation “Neoplatonic” to describe Ottoman Sufism – a doctrinal error so abundantly present in the relevant Western works.

²¹³ I would like to thank Spyridon Melas of Kazan University for pointing to this direction.

principles of Augustinianism as well as its overall nature are plainly heretical. Analogously for Roman Islam:

To many Rumi Muslims, whose understanding of Islam was strongly colored by Sufism, Ibn Taymiyya's rejection of a wide variety of Sufi beliefs and practices and his anathematization of the Andalusian mystic Muḥyī l-Dīn Ibn 'Arabī (d. 638/1240) as "Shaykh Akfar" (the most blasphemous master) would have seemed deeply objectionable as well²¹⁴.

It is exactly in this analogy, i.e., the deadly transition from living-out uncreated *Supraness* by uncreated divine energy to the terminological plagiarisms, merely orthopractic-moralistic and/or intellectual interpretation of 'emotive, ecstatic, otherworldly, metaphysical experiences' as the *telos* found in the line of Frankish Augustinianism for Christianity) (from Augustine to Bernard of Clairvaux to the utter profanities of Meister Eckhart and the likes) as well as of Ibn Taymiyya, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya and co. for Islam, that any talk of Christianity and Islamic 'neo-Sufism'/'reformed-Sufism'²¹⁵ in relation to them respectively is baseless, empty and un-hypostatic.

For the Ottoman case, it is easy to assign pre-eminence to the worldly authority over the religious, in precisely the way many Western authors describe the 'Eastern' Roman empire as Caesaropapist. For the same reasons, such an opinion is not tenable. The general pattern in the Ottoman state was of a mutual vital, symbiotic relationship between worldly and religious authority, similar to that prevailing in the Roman Christian Empire. By representing an incommensurable type of state-religion relations and by contrasting itself with *sinallilia*-type relations, the *Kadızâdeli* challenge and 'model' of those relations also serve as catalyst for clarification of this concept. The *Kadızâdeli* orthopractic-legalistic Islam, where God was an abstracted notion, challenged not only the predominant Ottoman understanding of religiosity, in which God was a friend of man and constantly meddling personally in human affairs, but also the concept of a strong state itself. In the line of ibn Taymiyya²¹⁶, the *Kadızâdelis* considered the Sultanate itself a post-patriarchal innovation and therefore contemptible. In other words, it was a Caliphal theocracy that was sought after. They also challenged the state-related position of the *ulema*, which was a structural expression of the *sinallilia* type of state-religion

²¹⁴ Terzioğlu 2020, 101.

²¹⁵ For suggestions in favour of this 'neo-Sufism' neologism, see, for example, the works of Thomas Michel, Fazlur Rahman and Mustapha Sheikh.

²¹⁶ Najjar 1984, 101.

relations. At no time were Ottoman state-religion relations similar to what was expressed in Ibn Taymiyya's dictum "[I]t is a duty to consider governorship (*imara*) as an act of religion...", defined in purely legalistic terms²¹⁷. It is also interesting in clarifying the nature of Ottoman *tasavvuf* that the *Kadıızâdelis* attacked not only *tasavvuf* 'practices' but essentially Ibn Arabi and the doctrine of *vahdet-i vücud*.

The differentiated unity of *kanun-şeriat* was institutionalized in the state. The *ulema* lacked the institutional power physically to carry out the *fetvas* since the *kadıs* (judges) were not under the administrative direction of the *Şeyhülislâm*. The *kadıs*, although they had generally to respect the *fetvas*, were not under any absolute obligation to apply them. This obligation extended, in an absolute way, only to the Sultan's 'worldly' firman. The *kadıs* practiced in the provinces according to 'secular' (*kanun*) and religious (*şeriat*) law. Despite the *millet* system in which the main four religious denominations possessed their own judicial hierarchies, even Christian peasants "consulted the Islamic judge and delivered their claims to the authority of the religious Islamic law, the Shari'a"²¹⁸. It was only during the 19th century that the judges were assigned to the *Şeyhülislâm*'s office. Most importantly, despite the expanding role and centrality the *Şeyhülislâm*'s office gained after the late 16th century, it was not considered an official government department, and the *Şeyhülislâm* conducted his business in his private residency²¹⁹. It became a government department only after 1826 with the destruction of the *Yeniçeris*. As we will see, this anti-Roman act not from within but from without Ottoman Romanity was not mere coincidence.

The overall type of Ottoman state-religious organization becomes clearly recognizable gradually from the reign of Fatih Mehmed, i.e., at the apex of direct Roman influence in the Ottoman administration, and the beginning of a gradual and total marginalization of the Turcoman elements from the Ottoman state. It is notable that the notion of the *ulema* as a religious bureaucracy is a clear deviation and contrast to the classical Islamic Empires. "This characteristic and position of the Ottoman *ulema* is one of the greatest changes in *ulema* history, and one of the clearest characteristics that separates it from the state-independent classical Islam *ulema* of the Umayyad and Abbasid periods"²²⁰.

In the field of Ottoman historiography, Islamic Romanity predominates:

²¹⁷ Najjar 1984, 101.

²¹⁸ Barkey 1994, 254.

²¹⁹ Akgündüz 2002, 104-6.

²²⁰ Ocak 1994, 82.

In the second half of the 16th century, several Rumi authors, that is, authors from the core, predominantly Turkish-speaking regions of the Empire, engaged in writing works in Arabic. Being Rumi, it should be emphasised, was not simply a matter of geography...²²¹.

“What is intriguing about the second half of the 16th century is the Rumi authors’ experiment with, participation in, and response to the Arabic historiographical tradition”²²². In this context, the treatment of official Ottoman history by the Roman Sunni historians took place within the Akbarian *tasavvufi* paradigm for Islamic orthodoxy and political legitimacy, the best example of which is the supposedly 13th-century, *Tree of Nu‘mān on the Ottoman Rule* (short, *al-Shajara*), attributed to Ibn Arabi who apparently had foreseen the rise of the Ottoman dynasty – in reality, the work is the product of early 17th century. “What is evident, however, is the universal acceptance of the work in the Ottoman cultural and intellectual context”²²³.

The famous 16th-century Ottoman historian, Taşköprülüzade İsmâeddin Ahmed bin Mustafa (1495-1561 AD) wrote in an idiom of an Islamic syzygy between *tasavvuf* and *şeriat*:

Taşköprüzade was interested in writing an Arabic biographical dictionary that would commemorate the names and deeds of *jurists and Sufi masters* who were affiliated with the Ottoman dynasty²²⁴.

“Taşköprüzâde’s *Shaqā’iq* consists of biographies of leading jurists and Sufi masters who operated in the Ottoman domains and/or, for the most part, maintained connections with the Ottoman dynasty or the Ottoman lands (at least in the author’s and probably his peers’ perception of the scholarly history of the Ottoman enterprise)”²²⁵. The incorporation of the Arab lands into the Empire prompted new challenges and required new responses: “The *Shaqā’iq* is clearly a rejoinder to many charges raised against certain scholarly circles and to the challenges they were facing. It also describes a process of growing institutionalization of the Ottoman hierarchy during the second half of the fifteenth and the first decades of the sixteenth century. Moreover, Taşköprüzâde promotes the notion of interdependence between the scholarly circles (jurists and Sufi shaykhs) and the imperial court as part

²²¹ Burak 2021, 54-55.

²²² Burak 2021, 55.

²²³ Burak 2021, 55.

²²⁴ Burak 2021, 56, emphasis added.

²²⁵ Burak 2015, 95.

of a broader process of change in the power relations between absolutists and their opponents”²²⁶. And that was the Way of Romanity:

In fact, the institutional and the doctrinal developments go hand in hand: the hierarchy, with its standardized career and training paths, monopolized access to the particular branch within the Ḥanafī school of law associated with the Ottoman dynasty and secured the privileged position of the branch’s followers within the Ottoman imperial framework. It is noteworthy that these developments did not escape seventeenth-century observers from the Arab provinces of the empire, who often mention the “Rūmī way” in their writings, referring to the Ottoman training and career track²²⁷.

Ecumenical Romanity:

One could argue that Ottoman authors were not oblivious to the perception of *dawla* from the Mamluk sources. But Ottoman sources, mostly written in Turkish, tended to focus on the more universal dimensions of *dawla* or *devlet*²²⁸.

In this dimension, our present discussion further validates and substantiates Schmidt’s concerns and criticism on the alleged central presence of a ‘steppe’ inheritance in the Ottoman milieu, such as found in the work of Fleischer. In his study on the works of the 16th-century Ottoman scholar and bureaucrat Muṣṭafa ‘Ālī, Fleischer claims that an understanding of history based on a fundamental distinction between ante- and post-Mongol eras is found in Ali’s writings. Based on that understanding, he proceeds to analyse the history of Ottoman state practices, such as the combination of the divine *ṣeriat* and the dynastic *kanun*. If we look at Fleischer’s analysis in detail, we see that it basically contains nothing that is contrary to an understanding of a commensurability between Roman Christian-Ottoman Muslim ‘ideology’ and state-religion relations - although he does not deal with the Roman dimension. Yet the connection to the ‘steppe’ is problematic. It seems to be more an imposition of a modern understanding that would make sense in a ‘nationalistic’ framework based on the necessary connection of Turkishness to Central Asia and the identification of Ottomans with Turks. In his insightful analysis of Ali’s works, Schmidt points out the shortcomings of Fleischer’s argumentation. Fleischer’s claims on this particular issue are unconvincing for two broad reasons. First, it does not seem that Ali was particularly aware, or more aware than others, of the presence of the ‘steppe’

²²⁶ Burak 2015, 98.

²²⁷ Burak 2015, 99.

²²⁸ Burak 2021, 53-54.

inheritance in Ottoman history. A major deficiency in Fleischer's argument stems from the fact that, as he himself points out, the 'steppe' theory of kingship "is equally applied to the Caliphate, or rather to the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties ... and later, partly also contemporary dynasties which were by no means all ruled by Turkish or Tatar dynasties. The Umayyads and Abbasids, therefore, had in Ali's view a similar status to all other historical dynasties"²²⁹. Secondly, as Schmidt states, 'Ālī does not seem "particularly, if at all, aware that *devşirme* or the co-existence of *şeri 'a* and *kānūn* – not only Chingizids had *kānūn*!, but all states, including ante-diluvian ones – were the result of an integration of the 'steppe' elements in the Islamic culture of the Empire. Ali mostly, as far as I can see, adheres to the conception of the equal status of *şeri 'a* and *kānūn*, the latter in the sense of the 'sound' of *kānūn* of [Sultan Mehmed] the Conqueror"²³⁰. We have already discussed the position of the Conqueror vis-à-vis the Roman and 'steppe' traditions. In fact, the reference to the indigenous *Rūmī* (Roman) understanding of the Ottoman *şeriat- kanun* relation is more in line with Fleischer's own definition of that term, - based on Ali's understanding and self-proclaimed identity - as someone – and in this case as something - "born and raised in the Ottoman domains, [...] with the distinctive regional culture that had developed in Anatolia and Rumelia [Balkans]"²³¹. Finally, as we have already seen, the relation between *kanun* and *şeriat* in the Ottoman understanding was not based on a mere co-existence but on a religious and 'ideological' doctrinally-prescribed differentiated unity of the two – a conception commensurable with the Roman ('Byzantine') understanding of them.

Kafadar states that "[p]henomenal as it was, however, the Ottoman expansion was slow when compared to the empire-building conquests of some other Inner Asian/Turco-Mongol tribal formations, such as those led by Chingis and Timur, or when compared to the swift rise of the House of Seljuk to the sultanate in Baghdad, the fabled seat of the Islamic caliphate"²³². Kafadar attributes the longevity of the Ottoman state to this protracted process, at times conflictual, at times co-operational. To the degree that they were not already representing an indigenous element, for at least one and a half centuries, Anatolia and Rumelia constituted the religio-political schooling ground from which, with the conquest of Constantinople, the Ottomans, to use Kafadar's expression, "graduated to an imperial

²²⁹ Schmidt 1991, 198.

²³⁰ Schmidt 1991, 198.

²³¹ Fleischer 1986, 253.

²³² Kafadar 1995, 9.

stage”²³³. It is not accidental that as Osman Turan argues the Ottoman state constituted the first centralist state in Turkish history²³⁴ - unsurprisingly so for it was Roman. And in this respect, the title of Özgür Kavak’s article on the translations of works of political thought as found in treatises concerning fiqh, kalam, hadith, Sufism, etc. from Arabic and Persian into Ottoman, captures the essence of the matter:

Rûmîyâne Libâs-ile Pîrâste ve Türki Etvâr-ile Ârâste
Adorned with Roman Dress, Embellished with Turkish Style.

Sabataism: The purely Roman Judaism of the ‘Byzantine-Ottoman’ Continuum

As far as Romanity is concerned, in the period under discussion, we witness - apart from the presence of the classical Judaism of Romanity - the development of a new stand of Judaism which possessed an almost purely Roman character – perfectly inter-encapsulating with its Christian and Islamic counterparts. The Sabataist movement, which originated in the person of the Jewish Sabatay Sevi in 17th-century Izmir, “constitutes one of the most important phenomena in Jewish and Ottoman history after [the mysticism] of Kabala”²³⁵. In the opinion of Idel, “the antinomian seventeenth-century figure known as the Messiah Sabbatai Tzevi was a Byzantine Kabbalist, to judge by the kabbalistic texts he studied”²³⁶. In terms of doctrine and practice as a religious community, Sabataism was related more to the classical *vahdet-i vücud* “Ottoman *tarikats* rather than the Kabala”²³⁷. Most importantly, the *Bektaşîyye* is connected directly to the founder of Sabataism, Sabatay Sevi, since according to the Sabataist tradition, his Muslim *Mehdî*-hood had been first acknowledged by a group of dervishes

²³³ Kafadar 1995, 9.

²³⁴ Osman Turan cited in Görgün 2000, 181.

²³⁵ Şişman 2008, 18.

²³⁶ Idel 2017, 541. Apart from canonical Judaism, which had remained alive for at least 1000 years in the Roman Empire (so-called ‘Byzantium’ (*sic.*)) from the times of Christ, the 13th century AD sees the emergence of a Jewish mysticism paralleling the relevant developments in the Frankish (Western) world, yet one which retained – at least exoterically – a Roman character (See, Idel 2017, 540) – with the whole chain starting with R. Abraham ben Shmuel Abulafi (1240–c. 1291 AD) (with many exoteric influences from Roman Christianity (‘Hesychasm’) and Roman Islam (*vahdet-i vücud* Sufism) (see Idel 1988).

²³⁷ Şişman 2008, 74.

headed by a Bektashi²³⁸. Niyazi Mısri (1618 – 1694 AD) (the spiritual comrade of Sabatay Sevi) maintained very close ‘spiritual’ and personal relations with Roman Christians²³⁹.

Conclusions

“Long after Fatih Sultan Mehmed who had conquered the center of the Roman domains, i.e., Byzantium, and had strived hard to appropriate/protect its identity in political and social terms, Kanuni Sultan Süleyman’s idea of ecumenical governance in the 16th century was without a doubt formed around the notion of Roman[-ity] (*Rûm*)”²⁴⁰. In 1524, the Ottoman Grand Vizier Ibrahim Pasha (d. 1536 AD) and the head of the Ottoman imperial chancery (*nişancı*), major prose stylist and historian, Celâlzâde Muştafa Çelebi (d. 1567 AD) descended upon Egypt for the execution of Egypt’s governor, Ahmed “the Traitor”. The political result of the visit was the promulgation of the *Kânünnâme-i Mısır*, or “Lawbook of Egypt,” in 1525 AD.

Drafted by Celalzade Mustafa in direct collaboration with Ibrahim, this text has been described as nothing less than “the political manifesto of Süleyman’s early reign” in that it openly argued for a new model of Ottoman universal sovereignty that combined spiritual legitimacy with an astrologically based ideal of celestial kingship”... As noted by Snjezana Buzov, the *Kânünnâme-i Mısır* was in fact *the very first official Ottoman text to associate in an explicit way the conquest of Egypt with a “transfer of the Caliphate” to Ottoman Istanbul*. In this early iteration, however, *this concept carried none of the connotations of Sharī‘ah-minded legalism that it would acquire later in the sixteenth century. Rather, it was a part of Ibrahim Pasha’s quite different ambition to transform the Ottoman state into a utopian “New Rome,” a millenarian empire which - far from a simple “revival of the caliphate” - would restore the lost glories of ancient universalism and allow the various peoples and faiths united under Ottoman rule to live together in perpetual concord*. More than two decades later, Salih Celalzade hinted at the enduring appeal of this project of transcendent,

²³⁸ Mirmiroglou 1940, 334.

²³⁹ On the subject of Niyazi Mısri and his thought – including the ‘Christian’ elements in it-, see Terzioğlu 2002. One of the sources of Mısri’s connection to Orthodox Christianity is the Ottoman Prince Dimitri Kantimir (Cantemir) (1673 - ???). Ortaylı characterises Cantemir’s famous book entitled *Ottoman History* as an extraordinarily objective work by the historiographical standards of the period (Ortaylı 1982, 67).

²⁴⁰ Özbaran 2004, 121.

transconfessional spiritual renewal through his description of the balsam trees of “Mary’s Well.”²⁴¹.

Moreover, Casale writes about: “Ibrahim Pasha’s utopian project to recreate a new “Ottoman Rome” based, in part, on models from the pagan past”²⁴² – the ‘project’ seems to mirror the Roman Constantinople as described by Choniaties before its destruction by the Frankish Crusaders in 1204 AD.

Specifically, during his years as grand vizier, Ibrahim had built a magnificent private palace for himself, today the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art, directly on the Hippodrome, immediately facing the Obelisk of Theodosius. By all indications, he chose to build at this site -in the ceremonial heart of ancient Constantinople and the original location of Emperor Constantine’s own residence - to showcase his project of restoring Istanbul to its rightful place as the New Rome. And provocatively, he did so by directly referencing not only Christian but also pagan history, erecting a classical bronze statue of Hercules (or, according to some accounts, of Palla Athena or Apollo) atop an ancient Greek column immediately next to the obelisk²⁴³.

After all the Grand Vizier Pargalı Ibrahim Paşa was a former Roman Orthodox Christian *devşirme* originally from Parga, Epirus. In fact, Pargalı Ibrahim Paşa remained true to the spirit of Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed in the face of Ottoman Sunnisation. And of course, utopia (*οὐτοπία*) means ‘nowhere’ from *ov-* (not) and *τόπος* (place, realm, location) but also – taking in account that the *ov-* is derived from *aiv-* (see, *αἰών* (aeon) “lifetime, eternity, generation, age”) also means ‘the Realm of Eternity’ – conditionally so for Roman Ottoman Islam as only Roman Christianity as such pertains unconditionally to the Road to Eternity *Supra*.

The 16th Ottoman scholar and bureaucrat Mustafa Ali was defined as *Rūmī* since he was “born and raised in the Ottoman domains, [...] with the distinctive regional culture that had developed in Anatolia and Rumeli”²⁴⁴. In his article titled, *Ottoman’s as ‘Rumes’ in Portuguese Sources in the Sixteen Century*, Özbaran discusses the intricacies of the distinctive Rumelian-Anatolian identity from a foreign (Western) standpoint. Halil İnalçık’s words provide a conclusive summary: “The Ottoman Empire was

²⁴¹ Casale 2021, 262-263. Casale’s article focused upon the person of the Ottoman scholar and official, Celālzāde Sâlih Çelebi (d. 1565 AD) – brother of Celālzāde Muṣṭafā Çelebi.

²⁴² Casale 2021, 270.

²⁴³ Casale 2021, 269.

²⁴⁴ Fleischer 1986, 253.

not a ‘Turkish Empire’. ... That the Europeans consistently referred to the Ottoman Empire as Turkey and the Ottomans as Turks is revealing of the European thought categories, but this venerable usage provides a procrustean mindset that seriously distorts Ottoman reality”²⁴⁵. To the degree it was Islamic, it was, as the mid- late 16th -century Ottoman scholar, Muştafa ‘Âlî attests, such in a manner far from an Arabic or Persian understanding of it. “While “Acem” constituted the most common binary of “Rumi” in Ottoman cultural discourse, as geographical designations the “lands of Rum” were regularly differentiated from the “Arab lands,” even after the incorporation of the latter into the Ottoman Empire, as well as from the “lands of Acem.” In the capacity of a place name, too, the word “Rum” could carry an emotive content of cultural affinity. In a quatrain attributed to Şeyhülislam Ibn Kemal (d. 1534) and addressed to Sultan Selim I, the scholar is alleged to have expressed the sentiments of the soldiery, who were tired of their lengthy campaign into Arab lands and yearning to return to Rum, in the sense of going back home:

What have we left to do in the Arab realm?
 Long have we stayed in Aleppo and Sham:
 People are all living in pleasure and charm.
 Let us go [back] then to the lands of Rum”²⁴⁶.

Summarily, we can say that the Byzantine-Ottoman inter-encapsulation and interpenetration was multidimensional and took place both at the elite and at the popular level – if this categorisation and the two ‘categories’ have any validity in the Ottoman case. In that light, it is only natural that the terms *Rum* (Roman lands) and *Ehli-Rum* (Roman people), apart from describing the Roman Empire and the Roman Christians, also had the meaning of *Ottoman Empire* and *Ottomans*, respectively²⁴⁷.

At the turn of the 18th century, we find the first signs of a disruption to the concept of *sinallilia* through the increasing ascendancy of the *şariat*.

Significantly, Ottoman experimentations with “*shar‘î* governance” continued also in the late eleventh/seventeenth and early twelfth/eighteenth centuries... As Ekin Tusalp Atiyas has pointed out, the Ottoman officials did not name specific texts but rather evoked the authority of either “the sharia” or “the

²⁴⁵ Inalcik 1996, 19.

²⁴⁶ Kafadar 2007, 16-17.

²⁴⁷ *Türkçe/Osmanlıca-İngilizce Redhouse Sözlüğü* [Turkish/Ottoman-English Redhouse Dictionary] 1999, 963 and 329.

books of Islamic jurisprudence” when they wanted to explain why they were breaking ways with some of the old Ottoman state traditions²⁴⁸.

During the reign of Mustafa II (1695–1703 AD) a firman was issued (1696 AD) stating that:

It is also highly perilous and most sinful *to juxtapose* the [terms] *sharī’a* and *qānūn*. Therefore in firmans and decrees all matters shall henceforth be based on the firm support of the noble *sharī’a* only ... and warnings are given against the coupling of the [terms] noble *sharī’a* and *qānūn*²⁴⁹.

Thus, Terzioğlu hits the mark when, going beyond the normativised Tyamiyyan-Kadızedeli conundrum, she writes that far more important were “the changes they began to introduce into the Ottoman state tradition during the second half of the eleventh/seventeenth century”²⁵⁰ by those who found recourse to the *siyāsa shar’iyya* literature.

From what followed in the coming centuries, we understand that these were the first hints of a disruption of the Roman *vahdet-i vücud*-based *sinallia*-type relationship between *şeriat* and *kanun* were fundamentally related to the gradual development of a new religiosity that would also challenge key Ottoman concepts such as *Nizâm-ı Âlem* – and for that matter its Roman counterpart, *Taxis*. These new developments were constituents of a broad process that would become more conspicuous and systematic in the latter half of the 18th century. Expectedly, “it can be seen that the balance between the *ulema* and the *şeyhs* breaks down from the 18th century [onwards]”²⁵¹. In the coming centuries, Islamic Ottoman Romanity and its Christian counterpart would be protractedly embattled against the newly emerging foreign and domestic forces of unconditional Frankish Westernism and Frankish-related Islamism.

²⁴⁸ Terzioğlu 2020, 139-140.

²⁴⁹ Heyd 1973, 154-155.

²⁵⁰ Terzioğlu 2020, 131.

²⁵¹ Kara 1985, 980.

CHAPTER 4

OTTOMAN ROMANITY EMBATTLED: DEATH AND RESURRECTION IN MODERNITY

Ottoman de-Romanisation became clearly discernible from the mid-18th century onwards and dominated the upper echelons of the Ottoman state well into the second stage of the *Tanzimat*. We have already talked about the catastrophic effects of Tsar Peter I (r. 1721-1725 AD) on Roman Russian Christianity violently turning it from Orthodoxy to Frankish-derived Orthodoxism and its dualistic Ottoman reception, from ridicule to exaltation. This overall Ottoman period – religiously from Roman Islam to Western/Oriental-Islamism - can be internally divided into a period of ‘modernisation’ based on essentially Islamist precepts, which ended at the end of the reign of Mahmud II (1939), and a period of ‘Westernisation’ represented by the second stage of the *Tanzimat*¹. The reforms associated with Ottoman de-Romanisation – particularly its first stage – were organically related to the rise to politico-religious prominence, especially among high state officials, from about 1760 onwards of a non-Roman Oriental (Indian-subcontinent) *tasavvuf* represented by the *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye* and its *Hâlidîyye* sub-branch – leading to a gradual retreat of the classical Ottoman *vahdet-i vücud*-based *Nakşibendiyye-i Ahrârîyye*. This development “necessitated a change in the way the state viewed the *tasavvuf* groups. The *vahdet-i şühûd* (unity of witnessing) thought system, which was represented by [this type of] *Nakşibendis*, came to occupy the position of *vahdet-i vücud*, which had been dominant since the establishment of the [Ottoman] state”². The newly emerging anti-Roman Islamist English-prompted Arab Wahhabi movement, which was concomitant with the overall Western intrusion in the peripheral lands of the Empire, facilitated the rise of the *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye* as its Ottoman counterweight. Now, things started to develop not only from within Romanity but also from without.

¹ Abu-Manneh 2001, 181.

² Bardakçı 2000, 203.

The first concrete steps towards Ottoman de-Romanisation and the passage from the dualistically monistic *sinallilia*-based state-religion relations of the classical Roman Ottoman *Nizam-ı Âlem* into the purely dualistic model of *din ve devlet* of the *Nizâm-ı Cedîd* (The New/Modern Order) during the reign of Selim III (1789 – 1807 AD) can be traced in the institutionalisation of the *Huzur Dersleri* (Lectures in the Imperial Presence) during the reign of Mustafa III (1757 – 1774 AD). It was part of the phenomenon of emphasising exoteric Islamic legalism in Ottoman religiosity³. The *Huzur Dersleri* put forward an image of the Sultan as the Islamic ‘scholar-master’ and brought an exoteric *şeriat*-oriented *ulema*, mainly of low rank, into the state political realm⁴.

A further concrete step towards Ottoman de-Romanisation - this time via Great power involvement - was the politicisation of the institution of the Caliphate. The signing of the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca on July 21, 1774 AD in the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid I (1774 – 1789 AD) constitutes a watershed in this process. The third article of that treaty assigned ‘the affairs of religion and creeds (*umûr-ı dîniyye ve mezhebiyyeleri*)’ of the Crimean Muslims to the Ottoman Sultan in his capacity as the Caliph of the Muslims (*halîfetü'l-muvahhîdîn*)⁵. It was within this policy that the term ‘*ittihâd-ı İslâm*’ (‘Pan-Islamism’) was born and would ideologically develop during the course of the next century⁶.

The Early Ottoman Islamists’ Attacks on Ottoman Romanity

The rise of the *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye* continued during the reign of Selim III (1789 – 1807 AD), who attempted to introduce a series of ‘reforms’ known as the *Nizâm-ı Cedîd* (The New/Modern Order). As Şen argues, these ‘reforms’, which were not directly inspired by the French Revolution, but followed the accumulated tradition in the various reform-relating documents such as ‘*Nasihat-Nâme*’, ‘*Siyaset-Nâme*’, ‘*Lâyihâ*’, clearly show that Selim III was not acting under foreign influence but within the Islamic concept of *meşveret* (consultation)⁷. Moreover, the *şeriat*, and the ‘*din ve devlet*’ model were central concerns of leading reformists⁸. As

³ Zilfi 1993, 184.

⁴ Zilfi 1993, 190.

⁵ Sarıcaoğlu 2001, 211.

⁶ Sarıcaoğlu 2001, 222.

⁷ Şen 2003, 218.

⁸ Şen 2003, 221.

Abu-Manneh shows, in the reign of Selim III there was a very strong connection between, on the one hand, the reforming elements of the Ottoman bureaucracy and members of great families of Istanbul, and, on the other hand, the *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye*, by way of its Kurdish *Şeyh*, Mehmet Emîn-i Bursevî/Kerkükî (1728 – 1813 AD)⁹. The key reasons for that were the ‘reformist’ character of the *tarikât* – which was exoteric *şeriat*-based - and its ‘alliance’ with the politically strongest *vahdet-i vücud tarikât* of the ‘Tulip Age’, i.e., the second-period *Melamiyye*, i.e., the *Bayramiyye-i Melamiyye*¹⁰. As for Sultan Selim III himself, he was a renowned Mevlevî with a close friendship with the famous Mevlevî *Şeyh* Galip, who, as Sezai Küçük shows, was not of a Bektashi/Alevî tendency¹¹. Yücer tells us that in order to support his *Nizâm-ı Cedîd* policies the Sultan strengthened the *Mevleviyye* in Istanbul as a counterweight to the *Bektaşîyye*, which the *Yeniçerîs* belonged to¹². Yet this must be understood also within the framework of the ‘alliance’ between the *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye* and the *Mevleviyye* in the Ottoman capital: “The Mevlevis enjoyed the personal interest of Selim III and Sultan Mahmud II”¹³. In fact, “a split emerged between the Konya-based leaders of the order and the Istanbul shaykhs over the advent of Sultan Selim III’s *nizâm-ı cedîd* (“New Order”) policies aimed at modernizing the Ottoman administration, finances, and military... [It was only] the Istanbul Mevlevî shaykhs, especially the influential Shaykh Gâlib (d. 1799), [who] sided with the Sultan’s reform project”¹⁴. The ‘alliance’ of these Roman *tarikats* with the non-Roman *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye* would have serious implications for their future existence and form.

The anti-Roman character that the Ottoman state was assuming was such that the Roman Christian and probably Bektashi¹⁵ Greek revolutionary Rigas Velestinlis (1757-1798 AD) argued that the Ottoman Empire, which had been “the most beautiful Kingdom of the World, praised by the wise men/women all over the world”¹⁶, in his days, had ended up being a mere tyranny from which “both Christians and Turks, without any discrimination vis-à-vis religion (*as they are all created by God and are the children of Adam*)”¹⁷ must save themselves.

⁹ Abu-Manneh 2001, 41-4.

¹⁰ Mutlu 2003, 233.

¹¹ Küçük, Sezai 2003, 84-5.

¹² Yücer 2003, 266.

¹³ Yücer 2003, 63.

¹⁴ Curry 2021, 410.

¹⁵ Hasluck 1929, 595.

¹⁶ Rigas (in Metallinos 1998, 265)

¹⁷ Rigas in Metallinos 1998, 264)

The setback that the *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye* and the principal policies of the *Nizâm-ı Cedîd* suffered due to the dethronement of Selim III by the Roman Bektashi *Yeniçeris* was only temporary. During most of the reign of Mahmud II (1808-1839 AD), not only would the *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye* reinforced its predominance among the upper classes of Istanbul, but the rise and expansion of its *Hâlidi* branch would attempt to carry the exoteric *şeriat*-based Sunnisation and the doctrine of the *tarikât* to the popular level, above all in Anatolia, and only secondarily in Rumelia (essentially in Istanbul).

De-Romanisation reached its apogee during the reign of Mahmud II along with the rise to predominance of the *Nakşibendiyye-i Hâliyye*. In this period, this *tarikât* was able to put into practice its three key principles, i.e., strict observation of the exoteric *şeriat* and the *sunna* (practice of the Prophet Muhammad), general hostility to Roman Christians, and near hatred of the Shiites, which in the Ottoman case it identified with Bektashi/Alevis in a very aggressive and violent manner. From 1819 onwards, the *Nakşibendiyye-i Hâliyye*, established by a Kurdish *şeyh*, Hâlid-i Bâğdâdî (d. 1826) began to assert itself in the Ottoman capital. Although Algar argues that “the circumstances of the first appearance of the *Khâliidiya* in Istanbul are obscure”¹⁸, Abu-Manneh rightly points to two important interconnected reasons for that appearance: the 1821 Greek War of Independence (of modern Roman character), and the fact that the *Hâliidiyye* was free from any state connections, so it was able to exploit the anti-Greek sentiments. Official documents of 1828 mention the coercive and aggressive character of that *tarikât* in attempting to attract new recruits *under the pretence of tasavvuf guidance (irşâd)*, something contrary to the rules (*âdâb*) of the (Roman Turkish) *tasavvuf* orders¹⁹. Initially the *Hâlidis* had a rough time in Istanbul. “Soon, however, the *Khâliidiya* began to win the favour of the Ottoman government, and it gained a large number of adherents, including the Shaykh al-Islâm of Mahmûd II, Muştafâ ‘Aşim Efendi. Mahmûd II himself patronised the *Khâlidis*, although for a time he seems to have held them in suspicion”²⁰.

The Mahmudian elite centre with its oriental religiosity was trying - and temporarily succeeded - to destroy an alternative modernisation periphery political movement which was essentially Roman Graeco-Turkish yet modernising - as we will see, this alternative modernisation path would ultimately lead to Kemalism. It needs to be kept in mind that “the reign of

¹⁸ Algar 1990, 38.

¹⁹ Abu-Manneh 2001, 47.

²⁰ Algar 1990, 38.

Sultan Mahmud was a hated one throughout the provinces”²¹. This periphery movement, which was also modernising, was a kind of an inter-encapsulation between the Roman Ottoman domestic popular *vahdet-i vücud* religiosity (either Orthodox Christianity and/or Turkish *Bektaşilik*, especially its Babağan branch) and the modern national ideals of the French Revolution. Rigas and the Albanian Beys like Tepedelenli Ali Paşa represent this movement. It is also interesting to point out that critical military leaders of the 1821 Greek Revolution related to Epirus (Northwestern Greece-Southern Albania) where *Babağan Bektaşilik* reigned supreme alongside Roman Orthodox Christianity. “The largest group of the revolutionaries of 1821 were the *Arvanite* (Albanian) Romans of whom many did not even know Greek”²².

The first serious Ottoman measure relating to de-Romanisation came with the abolition of the *Yeniçeri* corps in 1826. The *ferman* which announced the abolition of the *Yeniçeri* troops was read out not as a decision of the Sultan but of the *ulema* and the men of state within the framework of the dualistic ‘*din ve devlet*’ model. It was drafted by Pertev Efendi, who had entered the *Müceddidiyye* through Şeyh Mehmet Emîn. The *Yeniçeris* were castigated as conspirators and rebels against religion, held responsible for the decline of the state by defying the *şariat* and accused of avoiding fighting against the Greek revolutionaries. As Abu-Manneh points out, this type of Islamic terminology was similar to the 1821 proclamations against the Greek Revolution²³. If we take into account that, as Preston shows, the nature of the 1821 Revolution (at least up to the death of PM Ioannis Kapodistrias in 1831) at the popular identity level was essentially not nationalist as such but overwhelmingly Orthodox Christian²⁴, i.e., Roman, we can see that in reality the orientalisising Ottomans were acting against Greek-Turkish re-Romanisation in a modern setting. It is of interest that a revolutionary plan in 1809 aimed at the creation of an autonomous Helleno-Turkish state in the Peloponnese under French protection²⁵. The new army which replaced the *Yeniçeris*, known as *Asâkir-i Mansûre-i Muhammediyye* for the next decade (1827 – 1836), was headed by Mehmed Hüsrev Paşa, a strong sympathiser of the *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye/Hâlidîyye*²⁶.

²¹ Abu-Manneh 2001, 79.

²² Romanides (1978), “... the Arvanitic (Albanian) language spoken in Greece is approximately 50% Latin and 25-30% Hellenic” (Ibid).

²³ Abu-Manneh 2001, 49.

²⁴ Preston 1997, and Vogli 2007, 46.

²⁵ Vogli 2007, 38.

²⁶ Abu-Manneh 2001, 108.

A further act of de-Romanisation was the banning of the *Bektaşîyye*. On July 8, 1826, the *Şeyhülislâm* Kadızâde Tâhir Efendi presided at a meeting, 'secretly' watched by the Sultan, of leading *ulema* and nine representatives of various *tarikats* of Istanbul, at which the decision to ban the *Bektaşîyye* was taken²⁷. The *ferman* that followed castigated the Bektashis as unbelievers (*zındık*), schismatics (*rafz-ü ilhâd erbâbî*), and atheists/heretics (*mülhid*), and used terms like a gang of '*Alevî ve Revâfîz*' (schismatics). After the banning, the *Bektaşîyye*'s religious services were transferred to the *Nakşibendiyye*²⁸ - a situation which soon proved to be of a nominal character since an important number of the *Nakşibendi şeyhs* who were appointed as supervisors of the Bektashi *tekkes* later became members of the latter order. In 2002, Şevki Koca, *alias* Derviş Fecrî, a member of a prominent *Bektaşîyye* family, assured me – to my initial surprise – that 'Byzantium' did not really die in 1453 but in 1826 with the destruction of the *Yeniçeris* and the abolition of the *Bektaşîyye*.

It is most important to note that while the most Roman elements of the Ottoman state and society vehemently opposed the modernisation drive relating to the rise of the religiously anti-Roman *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye* in the Ottoman centre, they were heavily involved in modernisation efforts in the Ottoman periphery where the religious framework remained Roman as, for example, the case of the governor of Janina, Tepedelenli Ali Paşa (1790 - 1822) (himself a Bektashi exhibiting an utter proximity to Roman Christianity²⁹) shows. As we will see, with the gradual re-Romanisation of the Ottoman centre, the modernizing agenda would shift to the Roman elements of the state (the Bektashis, Melamis etc) by the end of the 19th century.

The change in Ottoman religiosity in the period between the mid-18th century and about 1830 went hand in hand with the breakdown of the classical Ottoman monistic *sinallilia* and its replacement with a dualistic '*din ve devlet*' (religion and state) model. As far as the *ilmiyye* class was concerned, Cihan shows that fundamental changes took place within the Ottoman establishment. The political authority of the classical Ottoman decision-making body, the *Divan-ı Hümayun*, in which the *ulema* was represented by the 'worldly' *kazaskers*, was gradually overshadowed by the *Meşveret Meclises*, which were comprised by the *ilmiyye* class members to a degree of 30-50%. These *Meşveret Meclises*, and especially the participating *ulema*, began to exercise unprecedented political power in key state policies well outside the realm of religion, such as foreign affairs and

²⁷ Yücer 2003, 467.

²⁸ Yücer 2003, 727.

²⁹ Mirmiroglou 1940, 197-202, and Noyan (Dedebaba) 2002, 48.

diplomatic relations, bureaucratic reform policies, military affairs, and administrative matters³⁰. Most of these *Meşveret Meclises* were held at the residency of the *Şeyhülislâm*, an office which became a government department only after 1826 with the destruction of the *Yeniçeris*. Symbolically, it took over the premises at the *Yeniçeri Ağa Kapısı*³¹.

Abu-Manneh shows that the *First Tanzimat* was essentially related to the newly-imported Islamist religious trend: “the proclamation of the [*Gülhane*] Rescript represented the apex of the impact on the Ottoman government in the nineteenth century of the ideals of the Sunni-orthodox Islam as expounded by the Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi order”³². It is interesting that the Rescript of 1839 was received very well by the Western powers. The Arabist scholar and archaeologist and mentor of the champion of anti-Roman-Ottoman Arabism, T.E. Lawrence, David George Hogarth (1862 – 1927), described the ‘reform achievements’ of Sultan Mahmud II as “nothing less than the elimination of the most Byzantine features in constitution and government ... the chief reforms carried through under Mahmud were all anti-Byzantine. They did not cause the Osmanli state to be born again but, at least, they purged it of official sin”³³! A thousand years had passed and for the Frankish Westerners being Roman was equated with the Original Sin...

While all the previous reforms were in accordance with an overall Islamist framework, the sources of the Second *Tanzimat* were almost totally foreign. The Crimean War constituted a watershed: “towards the end of the war the Porte issued the *Hatt-i Hümayûn* (February 1856). Known as the *Islahat Firmanı* (the Reform Edict), it was a dictate of the Western allies of the Porte, contrary to the *Gülhane* Rescript which was totally an Ottoman decision”³⁴. It is interesting to note that this unconditional Western-oriented modernisation was related to the *Veled* (exoteric/*şeriat*-based) branch of the *Mevlevîyye*. Both the Grand Vezirs, Keçecizade Fuad Paşa and Mehmed Emin Ali Paşa entered the *Veled* branch of the *Mevlevîyye* through the head of the Yenikapı *Mevlevîhâne*, Osman Salahaddin Dede (d. 1887)³⁵. In the mid-19th century that *Mevlevîhâne* constituted an early focal point of intellectual activity frequented by many important statesmen and religious

³⁰ For a comprehensive analysis of the position and role of the *ilmiyye* class between 1770 and 1876, see Cihan 2004.

³¹ Akgündüz 2002, 104-6.

³² Abu-Manneh 2001, 97.

³³ Hogarth in the “*Arab Bulletin*” (April 1917), quoted in Kedourie 1987, 91, emphasis ours.

³⁴ Abu-Manneh 2001, 114.

³⁵ Küçük, Sezai 2003, 358.

scholars of the Second *Tanzimat* – and also persons who latter would later represent Roman modernisation. The Yenikapı *Mevlevîhâne* represented an exoteric *şeriat*-based Mevlevism, at least up to 1908 with the death of its head, *Şeyh* Celaleddin Dede, who had formally succeeded his father, Osman Salahaddin Dede, in 1887. Due to his *tasavvuf* understanding, the Roman *Kalenderi* members of the *Mevleviyye* accused *Şeyh* Celaleddin Dede of having “turned the *tarikât* into a branch of the *Nakşibendiyye-i Hâlidîyye*”³⁶. In the same line, noting the ‘fanaticism’ (*yobazlık*) that the Yenikapı *Mevlevîhâne* represented, the famous *Şems* branch (Bektashi/Alevi/*batîni* (esoteric)) Mevlevi *Şeyh* of the Beşiktaş/Bahâriye *Mevlevîhâne*, Hüseyin Fahreddin Dede³⁷ (son-in-law of Osman Salahaddin Dede) once said to his students: “If it were not for the fact that it was a gate leading to Mevlana, I would have forbidden you to go there at all”³⁸. At the time of Osman Salahaddin Dede that *Mevlevîhâne* was known for its close relations with Melamism. Yet this was the *Bayramiyye-i Melamiyye* which, as we have seen, had formed an alliance with the *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye*. Abdulhamid II had close and long-lasting relations with Osman Salahaddin Dede, who had played an important role in the downfall of Murad V and in bringing Abdulhamid to the Ottoman throne³⁹. “He was subsequently appointed as the first head of the Council of Shaykhs (*meclis-i meşâyih*), a group of Sufi leaders appointed in 1866 to oversee the Sufi orders, and later turned the Yenikapı Mevlevi lodge into a center for reform-minded discussions for the Young Ottoman movement. Ironically, this made him a target of the later Sultan ‘Abdulhamid II’s constant surveillance. His descendants, not surprisingly, later supported the rise of the Committee of Union and Progress and the Second Constitutional movement”⁴⁰.

The intrusion of the Western powers into the affairs of the de-Romanising Empire, and the relevant reform policies during the Second *Tanzimat* of the 1850s and 1860s, gradually gave rise to two resistance trends. The first, which would lead to Abdülhamidian Pan-Islamism and later to late Ottoman Islamism, was related to a newly revived *Nakşibendiyye-i Hâlidîyye* and generally to *tarikats* based in the wider Islamic world (Arab lands, Central Asia, Indian subcontinent, etc). Although, during the 1860s, the influence of the *Hâlidîyye* was limited in the Ottoman capital, it was not

³⁶ Küçük, Sezai 2003, 133.

³⁷ Küçük, Sezai 2003, 159.

³⁸ From my interview (August 22, 2004) with Murat Bardakçı, a student of Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, and a member of a family that contributed significantly in Ottoman modernisation and Kemalism.

³⁹ Küçük, Sezai 2000, 368.

⁴⁰ Curry 2021, 411.

so for Anatolia. In the second part of the 19th century the *Nakşibendiyye-i Hâlidîyye* spread particularly in the southeast and along the Black Sea coast⁴¹. The introduction and spread of this *tarikât* into eastern Anatolia and northern Iraq – mainly Kurdish-populated areas – had significant social implications, since “along with the key position which tribal[ism] occupies in the area, the *Hâlidî Nakşibendiyye* reconstructed the local [social] structures”⁴².

Ottoman Romanity’s Resurgence in Modernity

From about 1849 onwards and with the support of Sultan Abdülmecid (1839 – 1861 AD), the *Bektaşîyye* began a rapid religio-political ascent. Both Sultan Abdülmecid and Sultan Abdülaziz (1861 – 1876 AD) were members of that *tarikât*⁴³. This was, in the words of Şerif Mardin, the revival of the *Yeniçeri* spirit⁴⁴.

To the degree that it might be related to the politico-religious intrusion of the *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye* into the Istanbul-based *Mevlevîyye*, this could be seen as the first sign of a developing deep doctrinal-political differentiation between the *Veled* and *Şems* branches of the *Mevlevîyye*, which progressed later in the century and led to the predominance of the latter (esoteric-Bektashi/Alevi) branch. The first clear signs of Islamist exotericism in the *Mevlevîyye* can be found in the works of Sakıp Dede (d. 1735)⁴⁵. This foreign intrusion into the Roman *Mevlevîyye* gave rise to its *batîni* (esoteric) branch. According to Gölpınarlı, from the 18th century onwards the Mevlevis began to look to their *Çelebi* in Konya as the “Sultan of the Inner [World]”⁴⁶. While the Mevlevis of Istanbul supported the anti-Roman Selim III and his policies, the head of the Konya *Mevlânâ Âsitânesi*, Mehmed Saîd Çelebi, opposed his *Nizâm-ı Cedid*. In other words, from the 18th century, the *Mevlevîyye* gradually began to assume a more esoteric-oriented (*bâtîni*) character. This was expressed by the gradual religio-political rise of its *Şems* branch, which Yücer describes as follows: “living as unconventional Bektashis and Melamis, the members of the *Şems* branch of the Mevlevis had submitted themselves spiritually (*intisâb etmek*) to

⁴¹ Yücer 2003, 853.

⁴² Yücer 2003, 39.

⁴³ For the former Sultan, Yücer 2003, 690 [quoting Rıfkı Baba’s *Bektaşî Sırrı* (The *Bektaşî* Secret)], and for the latter one, Şapolyo 1964, 449.

⁴⁴ Mardin 1962, 197.

⁴⁵ Binbaş 1997, 71.

⁴⁶ Gölpınarlı 1953, 278.

Bektashi *Şeyhs* for centuries, and they finished up closer to this *tarikat*⁴⁷. The *Şems* branch of the *Mevleviyye* followed the concept of “*Mevlevî sûret, Bektaşî sûret* (exoterically *Mevlevî*, esoterically *Bektashî*)”⁴⁸, and it was this branch that became religio-politically dominant during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. From about the middle of the 19th century until the closure of the *tekkes* in 1925, three out of the four key *Mevlevihânes* in Istanbul i.e., the Galata *Mevlevihâne*, the Beşiktaş(Maçka)/Bahariye *Mevlevihâne*, and the Kasımpaşa *Mevlevihâne* belonged to the *Şems* branch⁴⁹.

The gradual rise of the *Şems* branch also meant that the *Mevleviyye* would gain a more revolutionary and politically active character as far as Ottoman modernisation was concerned, rather similar to that of the *Bektaşîyye* and, above all, of the *Melamiyye*. This revolutionism would gradually, yet unevenly, manifest itself from the late 18th century, and would reach its peak from the later years of Abdülhamid II. This was also related to the 19th-century political developments that would necessitate a moving more ‘towards the people’ (*halkçılık*) and so becoming less elitist and Palace-related.

The re-Romanisation drive did not concern only the *Mevleviyye* but also the *Melamiyye*. Representing what Gölpınarlı calls ‘second-period Melamism’ (*Melami-Hamzavi*), the *Bayramiyye-i Melamiyye* had been based on a very solid *vahdet-i vücud* tradition, traced back not only to its founder Hacı Bayram Veli in the 15th century but even as far back as Yunus Emre. Yet it seems its alliance with the *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye* in the late 18th century, not only cost it its primal political position in the 18th century but led to its actual extinction in the 19th. Having come into a “scattered state”⁵⁰, it was largely (but not wholly) absorbed into the ‘third-stage Melamism’ of Seyyid Muhammad Nur ül-Arabi (1813-1887 AD), the *Nuriyye Melamiliği*. Seyyid Muhammad Nur ül-Arabi was heavily influenced by Ibn Arabi and he built his ‘path’ upon the theophosophy of *vahdet-i vücud*. The ‘official’ date of the establishment of the *Melamiyye-i Nuriyye* is accepted to be 1870, when Seyyid Muhammad Nur ül-Arabi assumed for himself the rank of ‘*kutbiyet*’⁵¹, i.e., he was self-named *kutb*. Third-stage Melamism included many more Bektashi elements – Gölpınarlı erroneously calls them ‘Shiite’ – such as the twelve Imams, etc, than its predecessor, the *Bayramiyye-i*

⁴⁷ Yücer 2003, 621.

⁴⁸ Küçük, Sezai 2003, 146-152.

⁴⁹ Küçük, Sezai 2003, 150.

⁵⁰ Gölpınarlı 1992/1931, 188.

⁵¹ Yücer 2003, 588.

*Melamiyye*⁵². It also exhibited many *hurufi* traces. Bolat observes that the *tasavvuf* thought of Seyyid Muhammad Nur ül-Arabi cannot be classified either as fully Melamism or as fully *Nakşibendiism* but as an especially *vahdet-i vücud* and *cezbe*-based⁵³ *tasavvuf* system with “*hurufi* and excessively present Shiite elements”⁵⁴. For these reasons, it possessed an important *batini* (esoteric) character *bridging the Sunni- ‘Shiite’ differentiation*. This is an extremely important point, since, as we will see, the transcendence of this differentiation is a key element of Kemalist *laiklik*. Gölpınarlı, who himself was a Mevlevi *Şeyh*, points out the intrinsic connection between Melamism and Bektashism/Alevism⁵⁵. Most importantly, as Bolat says, it is not at all accidental that Seyyid Muhammad Nur ül-Arabi chose as his area of activity Rumeli (the Balkans), in which “Hurufism and a unitarian [i.e., *vahdet-i vücud*-based *tasavvuf*] viewpoint was widespread by way of [Melami-]Hamzavism, Bektashism, and before them by Rufaism”⁵⁶. As in all forms of the *Melamiyye*, the principle of ‘secrecy’, i.e., the covering of one’s *tasavvuf* identity, is central to the *Melamiyye-i Nuriyye*⁵⁷.

The connection between the *Melamiyye-i Nuriyye* and Bektashism/Alevism is of particular interest bearing in mind that, on the one hand, apart from its *Ekberîyye*, *Halvetiyye-i Şabaniyye*, and *Üveysiyye* lines, the *Melamiyye-i Nuriyye* has also a *Nakşibendiyye* chain⁵⁸, and as Gölpınarlı says, it is accepted by some *tarikât* experts as a branch of the *Nakşibendiyye*⁵⁹, and on the other hand, the *Nakşibendiyye-i Hâlidîyye* came about as a reaction

⁵² Gölpınarlı 1992/1931, 283-5.

⁵³ The concept of *cezbe* possesses two interrelated meanings, which both denote the centrality of love. The first is the natural attraction and the direction of the Lover (i.e., the dervish and the human being in general) to the Beloved (i.e., the Divine). The second meaning of *cezbe* is that this love-based attraction leads the lover into a state of ‘divine foolishness’. Yet this ‘foolishness’, which we have seen in Chapter 1, depicts the state of perfection in the human condition in both Roman Orthodox Christianity and Roman Ottoman *tasavvuf*.

⁵⁴ Bolat 2003, 390.

⁵⁵ Gölpınarlı 1992/1931, 206.

⁵⁶ Bolat 2003, 390.

⁵⁷ Bolat 2003, 390.

⁵⁸ For all four chains, see the relevant web page of MEKSAV (*Hacı İbrahim Hakkı Öçal Melami Kültür ve Sanat Vakfı*), accessed July 22, 2022, <http://meksav.org/index.php/tr/melamet-nedir/iii-devre-melamet-tarihcesi/seyyid-muhammed-nur-un-hayati>.

⁵⁹ Gölpınarlı 1992/1931, 262. The religious founder of the *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiye*, Imam Rabbani, as Ahmad states, gave “to Indian Islam the rigid and conservative stamp it bears today” (Ahmad 1964, 189).

against Shiism, and, in the Ottoman case, against Alevism⁶⁰. In reality, as Gölpınarlı rightly argues, it is impossible to connect Seyyid Muhammad Nur ül-Arabi with the *tasavvuf* thought of Imam Rabbani⁶¹ and its *Nakşibendiyye-i Mücediddiye* and its branches. It is important to remember here that according to Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī, known as Imām Rabbānī “the goal of the Naqshbandī path is neither union with God, nor participation in His attributes, but simply to obey the Sharī‘a and to be a faithful servant of God. For him, there is no stage higher than the stage of servanthood (‘abdiyāt)”⁶². Similarly, Bolat states that there are indeed very few common points between the *Melamiyye-i Nuriyye* and *Nakşibendiyye*⁶³. Moreover, Gölpınarlı points out the significant proximity between Mevlevism and Melamism in general stating that “the Mevlevis are the most harmonious [and] fused together with the Melamis”⁶⁴. Another characteristic of the third-period *Melamiyye* is that wealth is not necessarily seen in negative terms and could be accepted as not necessarily detrimental normal to spirituality. Similarly, the acceptance of wealth as not *a priori* negative and the dependence of its goodness-badness upon whether it was justly acquired and used is an integral part of the *tasavvuf* ‘system’ of Rumi as well⁶⁵. Finally but most importantly, the Melamis of the third period possessed no *tekkes* in the conventional meaning of the term, and its members wore no particular *tarikāt*-related garments. As Gölpınarlı states, more than being *tekkes* as such, the Melami *tekkes* of the late period were local social gatherings⁶⁶. This is also “[b]ecause there is no ‘dervish class’ [in Melamism] as in the rest of the *tarikats*”⁶⁷. “Although the *Nuris* perform conventional *dhikrs* [(*zikirs*)] based on the names of God or on Koranic verses, they also regard conversation with their *murshids* [spiritual guides] as being in itself a form of *dhikr*. They in fact view it as the most important kind of *dhikr*⁶⁸”. Moreover, they consider “working to be the highest form of worship”⁶⁹.

It is characteristic of Seyyid Muhammad Nur ül-Arabi’s religious understanding that one of his key works was his commentary on *Varidat*,

⁶⁰ Yücer 2003, 320.

⁶¹ Gölpınarlı 1992/1931, 233.

⁶² Sheikh 2016, 61.

⁶³ Bolat 2003, 390.

⁶⁴ Gölpınarlı 1992/1931, 205.

⁶⁵ Bolat 2003, 369-70.

⁶⁶ Gölpınarlı 1992/1931, 300.

⁶⁷ Gölpınarlı 1992/1931, 300.

⁶⁸ Öztürk 1996, 115-116.

⁶⁹ *Bilimsel Tasavvufi Yaşam Derneği* (1990) (a Melami-related association).

the work of the Turco-Greek Şeyh Simavnalı Kadısıoğlu Bedreddin, who, as we saw in Chapter 2, was a key symbol of the 14th-15th-century Islamo-Orthodox Christian inter-encapsulation. This work constituted one of the primary reasons for the attacks on Şeyh Bedreddin by the orthopractic scholars⁷⁰. In the context of the late 19th century, like Şeyh Bedreddin who in modernity is usually related to socialism, Nur ül-Arabi was seen as the key protagonist striving for the establishment of a “(Melami) Islamic Socialist Federation”⁷¹ which would include all the anti-Tsarist Balkan peoples (Greeks, Serbs, Jews, etc). It is also important to point out the relation of Muhammad Nur’ül Arabi to Turkishness. Gölpınarlı states that although Nur ül-Arabi was racially an Arab, he fully assimilated Turkish culture and became a Rumelian Turk⁷². Only seventeen of his fifty-five works are written in Arabic, and these most probably because of him initially following the expressive style of the classical *tasavvuf* personalities. According to Gölpınarlı: “All this proves and confirms that the Seyyid was totally Turkified, and he was a true of bearer of the school which was represented by the Turks in the Turkish world for centuries and took its essence from the Turkish soul”⁷³. The only thing that remained from his Arab roots was “the ending of his name”⁷⁴. It should be noted that, in reality and despite his own pronouncements against *vahdet-i vücud*, Gölpınarlı here makes an unnamed correlation between *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* and Turkish religiosity, as well the distinction between them and Arabness. This is significant since, as we will see, Gölpınarlı played an important role in the educational part of the Kemalist religious policy.

The resurgence of Romanity from the mid-19th century onwards did not concern only its Christian and Islamic constitutive elements but also its Jewish one, i.e., the *dönmes*/sabataists, primarily in late Ottoman Salonika and Istanbul. In the late 19th-century Western Balkans, the most important part of Sabataist-*tasavvuf* relations was third- period Melamism. Zorlu mentions Muhammad Nur ül-Arabi in relation to *vahdet-i vücud* and Şeyh Bedreddin, to his proximity to Niyazi Mısri (the spiritual comrade of Sabatay Sevi), and to the presence of the ‘Shiite’ (i.e., Bektashi-Alevi) concept of the *Mehdi* (Saviour) and reincarnation in both Mevlevism and Sabataism⁷⁵. Many *dönmes* of Salonika and Skopje (Üsküp) also joined the *Melamiyye*, prominent among them being Ali Örfi Efendi and Osman Zevki

⁷⁰ Yüksel 2002 b., 103.

⁷¹ Nesimi 2008, 127.

⁷² Gölpınarlı 1992/1931, 286.

⁷³ Gölpınarlı 1992/1931, 287.

⁷⁴ Gölpınarlı 1992/1931, 287.

⁷⁵ Zorlu 2001, 49-50.

Efendi⁷⁶ - both also Freemasons – and Usturumcalı Hacı Süleyman Bey⁷⁷. Moreover, as Stavroulakis states, “many [Sabataists] were closely associated with the dervish orders, especially the *Mevlana* and Bektashi, both of which had inner or secret teachings that stressed the unity of religious experience, the love of God, and the abandonment of self”⁷⁸. Şişman says that Bektashi and Mevlevi hymns comprise a substantial part of the *dönme* songs and religious hymns⁷⁹. According to Zorlu, the links of the Sabataists with the *tarikats* continued up to 1924 and were progressively diminished after the exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey and the transfer of the *dönmes* of Salonica to Istanbul⁸⁰.

The Roman Islamic Modernists

In the second part of the 19th century we witness the development of a modern genre of Ottoman literature: “in response to the feudal classical [Ottoman] literature, which was based on the Palace and the Palace-supported *medreses*, on the *tekkes*, on the state dignitaries, and on the city and village notables, the school of Şinasi-Ziya Pasha -Namık Kemal wanted to create a bourgeois literature that was inspired fully by the French Revolution, which would serve the ideals of the *patrie* (*vatan*), the nation (*millet*) and populism (movement towards the people, *halkçılık*)”⁸¹ – something first seen almost a century before in the thought of Rigas Velestinlis. The French Revolution-inspired ideal of freedom, the ‘movement towards the people’ (an ideal which at the time of the 1908 Young Turk Revolution would be reinforced by Russian *Narodnik* Movement influences (Socialist-Populist Revolutionaries) via the Russian émigré members of the Young Turks) and the nation, initially its Ottoman and later its Turkish conception, would bring to the fore Bektashi/Alevi trends. Ziya Pasha (1840-1880 AD)⁸² and Namık Kemal (1840-1888 AD)⁸³ were two of the key members of the “Society of New Ottomans”, the first important opposition political formation, which seriously contributed to Ottoman modernisation in the second part of the 19th century. Both were

⁷⁶ Zorlu 2001, 51.

⁷⁷ Yüksel 2002, 91.

⁷⁸ Stavroulakis 1990, 90.

⁷⁹ Şişman 2002, 14.

⁸⁰ Zorlu 2001, 51.

⁸¹ Küçük, Sezai 2003, 399, quoting Fuat Köprülü.

⁸² Koca 2001. According to Noyan (Dedebaba), Ziya Pasha entered the *Bektaşîyye* by way of Mor Ali Baba of Sivas (Noyan (Dedebaba) 2003, 358).

⁸³ Mélikoff 1999, 304-305.

also Freemasons⁸⁴. A Bektashi/Alevi-based *tasavvuf* understanding – yet not necessarily organisationally actualised (*tekkeci*) *tasavvuf* – constituted the substratum upon which this political modernisation movement was formed, with Freemasonry in its Ottoman understanding providing some of the ideological connections with the Western European power centres.

Before coming into contact with Western thought, Namık Kemal grew up in a fully *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* environment relating to the *Şems* branch of the *Mevleviyye*⁸⁵. Under the influence of the Alevi Eşref Paşa, Namık Kemal “wrote his poetry on Alevism. Among the various Turkish *tarikats*, the Bektashi allowed for the presence of the most Turkish elements. The Bektashis were close to the people and the majority of their members were from the illiterate masses. Bektashi literature was an important branch of folk literature, and played an important role in the development of Turkish literature. Due to the fact that they were often persecuted for their beliefs, the Bektashis supported free thought”⁸⁶. Namık Kemal’s Alevi-related poetry, which exalted Imam Ali, exhibited the classical Bektashi/Alevi theme of a struggle against all kinds of injustice, social or otherwise. In his poem ‘*Şahımdır Ali*’ (Ali is my Shah), written ‘with the love of Ali’, he repeats at the end of every couplet: ‘*Aleviyim*’ (I am an Alevi)⁸⁷. At a more general level, “[at the same time as] influencing Namık Kemal, the Bektashi *tarikat*, with its tolerant way and siding with the oppressed, was also influencing the thought structures of the Ottoman Empire of the time”⁸⁸.

After coming to Istanbul in 1857, Namık Kemal jointed the ‘*Encümen-i Şuara*’ (Society of Poets), which included leading intellectuals of the time such as Leskofçalı Galip, Osman Şems Efendi, Kani Paşazade Rıfat Bey, Ziya Paşa and Lebib Efendi. “Among these poets, the majority of whom were Bektashi and Albanian, there were also Mevlevis and *Nakşibendis*. These poets, who belonged to different *tarikats*, were writing *tasavvuf* (*Divan*) poetry under the influence of *tasavvuf* philosophy, but at the same time they loved pleasure and drinking”⁸⁹.

From 1867 until 1870, Namık Kemal travelled in Western Europe, where he came into closer contact with the thought of both ancient Greek

⁸⁴ Mélikoff 1999, 303-4.

⁸⁵ Küçük, Sezai 2003, 178.

⁸⁶ Dinç 2003, 22-3.

⁸⁷ Meydan 2003, 111.

⁸⁸ Dinç 2003, 23.

⁸⁹ Dinç 2003, 25. Dinç also says that the suggestion that Namık Kemal was Mevlevi comes from his participation in that society. This makes full sense only if Kemal was a Mevlevi of the *Semş* branch.

(Plato and Aristotle) and modern Western philosophers, such as Descartes, Rousseau, Voltaire, Danton, Garibaldi, Hobbes, and Locke. Of them all, Rousseau predominated in Namık Kemal's thought: "Rousseau and his 'Social Contract' occupy a special place among the political thinkers and works that Namık Kemal emphasised"⁹⁰. "Starting from the New Ottomans, the influence of Rousseau on the freedom movement of our country has been deep. His famous book, *The Social Contract*, which set the principles of his natural law theory, was translated by one of the leaders of the New Ottoman movement, Ziya Paşa. The New Ottomans referred to Rousseau's ideas in such a way as to prove correct their own conciliatory views"⁹¹. The closeness of Namık Kemal to Rousseau, who "deliberately set himself against the whole trend of the Enlightenment"⁹² in its totally anti-religious and individualistic form, is not at all accidental, since of all modern Western philosophical trends, the closest one to Roman *vahdet-i vücud* theosophy is that of Rousseau in his ideas of the unity of being⁹³, the natural goodness of the human being⁹⁴, the general will and, most importantly, civil religion. In fact, "with this religion of the will, Rousseau tries to reconcile religion with the principles of the Enlightenment. He wanted to convince his fellow philosophers [that] religion had not necessarily to be destroyed"⁹⁵, i.e., ostracised from the public space. Rousseau holds a similar place in Atatürk's own worldview and political thinking too, as will be shown in Chapter 5. In general, the Young Ottomans derived their political views from Rousseau comingling them with key Islamic precepts. For Namık Kemal, the early Islamic state represented "a kind of a Republic", which was based on the Koranic principle of "consultation", which constitutes the modern basis of a parliamentary system and political rights⁹⁶. As we will see in Chapter 5, that was exactly, almost word for word, the Islamic understanding within which Atatürk situated the origins of the Turkish Republic and the Turkish Parliament. Namık Kemal envisaged a partnership between the state and the people based on the principle of consultation. As Kurdakul notes, he believed that this 'political order' had existed among the Ottomans up to the time when

⁹⁰ Meydan 2002, 133.

⁹¹ Perinçek 2006, 23.

⁹² MacIntyre 2000, 182-3.

⁹³ Velkley 1997, 70.

⁹⁴ MacIntyre 2000, 183-4.

⁹⁵ Rehm 2003, 11.

⁹⁶ Meydan 2002, 114-5. As Meydan says, these were not simply Namık Kemal's personal beliefs but were central in the thought of the "New Ottomans".

the *Yeniçeris* became corrupt and oppressive⁹⁷. In Namık Kemal's understanding of the *şeriat*, it was positively related to issues such as freedom, equality, justice, natural rights and duties, the right of state hegemony, and consultation - all of them central in Rousseau's *Natural Rights* and *The Social Contract*⁹⁸.

Namık Kemal's understanding of Western thought was effectively conditioned by his *vahdet-i vücud*-based, especially Bektashi/Alevi, understanding of Islam. Meydan rightly points out that "Namık Kemal's Islamic understanding was a facilitative influence in his absorbing of Western values and institutions"⁹⁹. Yet at the same time, we need to point out that the same religious understanding provided the limits for and the counterbalance to Westernisation as such. This is also clear from his criticisms of Western Orientalism, especially in the person of the Catholic Orientalist Ernest Renan (1823–1892 AD).

Namık Kemal's Freemasonry shows his understanding of modernisation to be not fully identical with 'unconditional Westernisation', his love for the Ottoman *patrie* as a whole, and the influence of Bektashism and its proximity to Orthodox Christianity. The predominantly Greek-speaking Masonic Lodge '*Η Πρόοδος*' (Progress) of Kleanthis Skalieris constituted a locus of Namık Kemal's political activity¹⁰⁰. Together with Skalieris, they supported the introduction of a constitution and also Prince Murat's struggle for the Ottoman throne, something which was temporarily accomplished in May 1876. After Sultan Murat's abdication and his replacement by Abdülhamid II who in the end forfeited his promise for a constitution, Namık Kemal participated in the preparations of a plot against him. He was subsequently accused of aiming to establish a constitutional republic, arrested and, although acquitted, sent into exile on the island of Mytilene.

From about the 1860s, Ottoman Freemasonry assumed a strong Roman *vahdet-i vücud* character, particularly via Bektashism¹⁰¹ and secondarily Melamism – historically understood in the indigenous tradition of the 14th-

⁹⁷ Kurdakul 1991, 31.

⁹⁸ Kurdakul 1991, 31-2.

⁹⁹ Meydan 2002, 112.

¹⁰⁰ For information on Skalieris, Sultan Murat V, Namık Kemal and the '*H Proodos*' Lodge, see Tezcan (1998), Svolopoulos 1980, and Mazis 2002 b.. For Namık Kemal's entry record (apprentice-level) dated Feb. 24/1872, see Tezcan 1998, 29.

¹⁰¹ See Sebottendorf 1988/1924 and Abu-Manneh 2001, 136. Von Sebottendorf's book (pp. 58 and 68-99) shows a clear *vahdet-i vücud* connection, speaking about overcoming an obstacle through that obstacle, the unity of the many, the spiritualisation of matter and the materialisation of body (body-spirit/mind unity), etc.

century Roman *Ahilik* (*Ahiyyân-ı Rum*), the *fütüvvet* ‘organisation’. A systematic relation between Ottoman Freemasonry and the Bektashis and seems to have begun after 1867 through the Egyptian Prince Mustafa Fazıl Pasha, which later developed into an alliance with the New Ottomans too. By the end of the century, the relation between Freemasonry and Bektashism grew even stronger¹⁰², but it began to falter around 1912 and totally ended after the occupation of Istanbul by the Éntente Powers in 1918. According to Yücer, Namık Kemal, Talat Pasha and *Şeyhülislâm* Mûsâ Kâzım Efendi constitute the most distinguished cases of that relationship¹⁰³.

It is clear that for Namık Kemal, Freemasonry provided a conduit for international (Western-led) ideas and contacts adapted to the needs and subordinated to the notion of the Ottoman multi-religious *patrie* (*vatan*) and Roman Ottoman Islam – the same holds true, as the case of Skalieris shows, for Roman Christianity. This reflected a certain theophilosophical subordination of Freemasonry to Roman *vahdet-i vücud* in general, both among the New Ottomans and later the CUP. Indeed, as Cemal Bardakçı, one of the founders of the Freemason-Bektashi CUP faction, testified, the New Ottomans and at least in the beginning the CUP members in general largely equated the Freemason doctrine with *vahdet-i vücud*¹⁰⁴. Çeçen asserts that, primarily under the influence of Gökâlp, the CUP members

¹⁰² Yücer 2003, 508.

¹⁰³ Yücer 2003, 508; also primary sources, e.g. Rıza Tevfik (Bölükbaşı) [Ramsaur 1957, 113], Koca (2001), and Noyan (Dedebaba) 1995, 448, and secondary ones, such as Mélikoff 1999, 305. Certain generally exclusivist pro-Sunni researchers, like Hülya Küçük, argue against *Şeyhülislâm* Mûsâ Kâzım Efendi’s Bektashism and Freemasonry, and for an exclusive relation to the *Halidi-Nakşibendiyye* [Hülya Küçük 2003, 118]. In fact, his Bektashism and *Nakşibendi*-ism were not mutually antithetical, since such an affiliation was doctrinally possible for a Roman *vahdet-i vücud* *Ahrârî* (Anatolian *Hacegân*) *Nakşibendi*. It should also be kept in mind that during the reign of Mahmud II we witness the development of an exoteric *şeriat*-bound branch within the *Babağan Bektaşîyye*, the *Müteşerri* sub-branch, which related itself to the *Hacegân Nakşibendiyye* chain [Koca 1999, 331-339]. The other branch of the *Babağan Bektaşîyye* was the *batnî Harabati* sub-branch. In my interview with the grandson of Cemal Bardakçı (a Freemason and Bektashi CUP member), Murat Bardakçı on August 22, 2004, he confirmed *Şeyhülislâm* Mûsâ Kâzım Efendi’s Freemasonry, *Bektaşîyye* and *Ahrârî* (Anatolian *Hacegân*) *Nakşibendiyye* membership. In fact, Bardakçı possesses two of *Şeyhülislâm* Mûsâ Kâzım Efendi’s Bektashi *teslim taşıs* (‘submission stones’) (the first is of very dark brown-blackish colour with some inscriptions on it, while the second is made of normal wavy beige-greenish marble with a green cordon passing right through it), and his translation of Şeyh Bedreddin’s *Varidât*.

¹⁰⁴ Author’s interview of August 22, 2004 with Murat Bardakçı.

attempted to resurrect *Ahi* ‘guild’ organisations¹⁰⁵. In addition, in those Freemason lodges of the period which were under the control of domestic elements – mostly Ottoman Greek Christians with Turkish Muslim and Jewish members – like *H Proodos*, the ultimate aim was the creation of a new modern Roman Helleno-Turkish state: “Utilising the effects of Freemason ideology, the solution to the Eastern Question with the co-operation of the Turkish and Greek peoples was the creation of a New Byzantine State under the direction of the sultan and as a result of the fusion of the Greek and Turkish elements”¹⁰⁶. We have already mentioned in the “Prolegomenous Epilogue” section various Graeco-Turkish modernisation visions based upon the Roman ‘Byzantine’-Ottoman past. This Greek-Turkish inter-encapsulation was exactly the policy followed by Atatürk and Venizelos in the 1930s. For this reason, to use the words of the Greek Prime Minister Deligiorgis (six times between 1865 and 1877), the relevant political activities aimed at the “renaissance of the East originating from the East”¹⁰⁷ – where both Hellenism and Turkism represent the East. This school of thought, which ultimately led to Kemalism, represents the Roman modernists, Christian and Islamic. Within this framework, Namık Kemal “accused the reformist public servants of his era – the era of the *Tanzimat* - of having by their actions allowed the Western economic penetration of the Empire. He became a defender of the *Ottoman patrie* in its totality (not of the Turkish nation): *patrie* (*vatan*), not nation ... he longed to see it united into a strong and modern eastern state that would include both the Christians and the Muslims, and that would be in a position to counterbalance the power of the West”¹⁰⁸.

Namık Kemal’s thought and method constituted a ‘middle way’, both Western and Eastern, and neither fully Western nor fully Eastern. It was modernisation, yet not Westernisation, and re-Islamisation based on the Roman Islam of Rumelia and Anatolia. Namık Kemal’s modernisation drive was designed to take effect within the politico-social conditions of Ottoman society and the international system of the time. It is important to keep in mind that the overall political environment was very much under the control of the state-supported idea of a Caliph, who represented God’s religion and state on earth for the Islamic world, and an Islamic understanding of the inseparable relation between the Caliph and the exoteric *şariat*.

¹⁰⁵ Çeçen 2000, 46.

¹⁰⁶ Koloğlu 2002, 50.

¹⁰⁷ Mazis 2002b., 507.

¹⁰⁸ Kitsikis 1996, 246.

Namık Kemal propagated the idea of a common Ottoman ‘national identity’ based on ‘the unity of all the different peoples of the Empire’¹⁰⁹ – in essence very similar to that the vision of the Roman Greek Rigas. This ‘Ottoman identity’ possessed two important characteristics. The first was the principle that the various religious creeds of the social groups found in the Empire (Islam, Christianity, Judaism) should not represent a ‘discriminating’ or ‘separating’ factor. As in the case of Rigas’ Roman religiosity, this is perfectly explainable by Namık Kemal’s proximity to *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* (Bektashism and the *Şems* branch of the *Mevleviyye*). The second characteristic of Namık Kemal’s ‘Ottoman identity’ was a latent priority to the Turks – in a similar manner to that of the Rigas’ Greek pre-eminence and later of Ion Dragoumis. In order to express the common ‘focus of national loyalty’, Namık Kemal used different terms such as *millet*, *ümme*, *kavim*, etc, but also sometimes *Türk*. “When he was talking about the [common Ottoman] *patrie* (*vatan*), he did not mean only a geographical unit, but ‘a sentimental link’ to the famous old Ottomans, whom he equated with the Turks. Namık Kemal’s *Vatan Yahut Silistre* was a play that extolled the bravery of the Turks as much as it dealt with patriotism”¹¹⁰.

Şehbenderzâde Filibeli Ahmet Hilmi: Neglected Roman Islamic Proto-laik and Proto-National Thought

Şehbenderzâde Filibeli Ahmet Hilmi (1865–1914 AD) represents an especially important yet basically unidentified representative of the Roman modernists, not only due to his contribution in shaping Atatürk’s worldview, but particularly since his works are situated within the religious in general and Islam in particular. Şehbenderzâde was a religious master of *vahdet-i vücud* theosophy, author of many works such as *Yeni Mantık* (The New Reason, unfinished), *İslam ve İstikbalin Dini* (Islam and the Religion of the Future), *Bektaşiler* (unfinished), and *Şeyh Bedreddin*¹¹¹ - the latter being a favourite religious revolutionary example for important CUP members and, later, Kemalist¹¹². His best-known work in the West is *A’mâk-ı Hayâl* (‘The Depths of Dreams’)¹¹³. Şehbenderzâde was a member of the *Arûsî tarikat*,

¹⁰⁹ Kitsikis 1996b., 192-3.

¹¹⁰ Özdoğan 2001, 57.

¹¹¹ Şehbenderzâde 2002, 2. On his series on the Bektashis see Yücer 2003, 532.

¹¹² See, for example, Mahmut Esat Bozkurt’s case (Bozkurt 2003/1940, 123-124).

¹¹³ The issue of dreams was central in Akbarian theosophy; see Çakmaklıoğlu 2003.

like Field Marshall Fevzi Çakmak. Atatürk studied in depth at least two of his works: *Allah'ı İnkâr Mümkün mü* ('Can God Be Denied?') and *Tarih-i İslâm* ('The History of Islam').

Atatürk read *Allah'ı İnkâr Mümkün mü?* in the form of a supplement to *Tarih-i İslâm* on Dec. 1-3, 1916¹¹⁴. According to Meydan, the former made a significant impression on Atatürk, particularly on the issue of the relationship between God's existence and the intellect¹¹⁵. *Tarih-i İslâm* is among the books that Atatürk personally read and inscribed upon that can be found in the private library of Atatürk in Ankara's *Anıtkabır*. At certain points, Atatürk wrote the word *mühim* (important). After finishing reading this book, Atatürk noted among other things:

All the philosophers and the members of the various religions examine [the questions as to] whether the soul exists, whether there is a unity between the soul and the body, and whether the soul lives or not. In this, those who are based on science were positive. The writings of Islamic scholars like İmam Gazali, İbn Sina, İbn Rüşd, etc. include understandings that are totally different from the pre-existing ones; only in their writings there are so strong symbolisms. [Subsequently,] the religious thinkers tried to transform the spiritual knowledge, science and understandings of those scholars as to be used for the interpretation of the *şeriat*¹¹⁶.

Şehbenderzâde's *Allah'ı İnkâr Mümkün mü?* is essentially a positive comparison between *vahdet-i vücud* theosophy and, primarily ancient Greek and secondarily modern Western philosophy. In fact, Şehbenderzâde calls İbn Rüşd a kind of 'spokesperson' for Aristotle¹¹⁷. In the section discussing ancient Greek philosophy, and especially Aristotle, he states:

So if it is seen in that way, the innate religious belief of humanity turns to the *vahdet-i vücud*. *Vahdet-i vücud* is the innate religion of humanity¹¹⁸.

Published in 1908-1909, Şehbenderzâde's *Tarih-i İslâm* (The History of Islam) was one of the most important writings on philosophy, *tasavvuf*, history and political thought of the period, and it had an equal effect on the founder of the Turkish Republic. In this book, Şehbenderzâde took issue with the understanding of Islam and its history as presented in Western Orientalism, especially in the works of the Dutch Orientalist Reinhart Dozi

¹¹⁴ Borak 1973, 147 and Afetinan 1983, 23.

¹¹⁵ Meydan 2002, 465.

¹¹⁶ Afetinan 1983, 23.

¹¹⁷ Şehbenderzâde 2001/1911-12, 149.

¹¹⁸ Şehbenderzâde 2001/1911-12, 178.

(1820–1883 AD), and its Ottoman domestic version of unconditional Westernists, such as Abdullah Cevdet¹¹⁹, who typically considered Islam and religion in general an obstacle to their ‘Westernisation’ ideal¹²⁰.

What is of major importance is to recognise that Şehbenderzâde’s Islamic history puts forward a Roman proto-*laik* worldview, and especially, a Roman *sinallilia* framework in which the classical Ottoman *sinallilia* is inversed with the worldly playing the predominant role. Şehbenderzâde recognised that the attacks on the Prophet and his family (*ehl-i beyt*) by the Western Orientalist could not be answered on a one-by-one basis because they basically stem from deficiencies internal to the Orientalists’ approach and method. At the same time, recognising that the Muslims failed not only to provide a solid answer to the Orientalist onslaught due to their epistemological deficit in scientific knowledge, Şehbenderzâde attempted to fight that onslaught with ‘its own weapons’, i.e., the centrality of the intellect and science. Şehbenderzâde puts forward the intellect/mind (*akıl*) and science (*fen*) as the key faculty in the study of religion. He explicitly warns his reader that his effort to refute the Orientalist attacks stems not from “an Islamic zealotry” but exclusively from “a zealotry based on the intellect and science”. For him, although it is understandable for a religious zealot to lie for the love of his/her religion, “lying when one is searching for the truth and ‘in the name of science which is entirely neutral’ is abhorrent ...”¹²¹. Kara argues that Şehbenderzâde’s approach to history is not based on *ilim*, i.e., on history as recording the ‘holy’, but on history based on *fen* (science)¹²², i.e., from a worldly perspective. According to Kara, Şehbenderzâde’s definitions of various concepts such as religion, etc, show a strong influence from modern sociology and social history. Moreover, it is important to note that Şehbenderzâde *does not* consider religion as based on the interplay of, on the one hand, the individual-society, and on the other, the metaphysical¹²³.

According to Kara’s interpretation, Şehbenderzâde holds science above religion¹²⁴. In Kara’s view, this is done because of Şehbenderzâde’s understanding of science as separate from and above religion, in other words, his understanding of the worldly. “Even if he himself does this by way of a separation (the process of separating two spaces from each other [i.e., the worldly/science from the religious]), this separation at the same

¹¹⁹ Kara 2003, 110-1.

¹²⁰ Akgül 1999, 137.

¹²¹ Kara 2003, 115.

¹²² Kara 2003, 114.

¹²³ Kara 2003, 113.

¹²⁴ Kara 2003, 116.

time brings to the fore a hierarchy in favour of science and against religion”¹²⁵. Although that might be the case in Kara’s view and from Kara’s own understanding of what is religious, the most important issue here is that in Şehbenderzâde’s own *vahdet-i vücud*-based Islamic understanding, this separation does not contain internal contradictions that bring the two spaces into conflict. On the contrary, in his view, this separation is fully harmonious with Islam, which possesses both an individual and a public dimension, and indeed, it saves the Islamic religion from the miserable state it had fallen into through the neglect of science. In other words, religion is re-established and at the same time is separated from worldly affairs. Yet this re-establishment takes place in an overall worldly framework in which science predominates. This is exactly the Roman Ottoman *sinallilia* model with the roles of the worldly and religious inversed in emphasis. It is exactly what we had expected to find in a secularising religious milieu in which the *vahdet-i vücud* theophosophy is predominant. In short, it possesses the key characteristic of Kemalist *laiklik*.

The overall-worldly framework which Şehbenderzâde puts forward contains not only a science-related component but also a certain type of proto-nationalist one. This is most interesting, since Şehbenderzâde is commonly classified in the established literature as belonging to the Islamist modernisation trend. In his analysis of Ottoman Islamism, Khalid shows that Şehbenderzâde’s thought and writings contain a solid conception of Turkish nationalism. To begin with, Şehbenderzâde fully denies the validity of any notion of Pan-Islamism. For him, “the unity of all Muslims in the world ... was against all laws of history and nature and human needs”¹²⁶. Instead, he focuses on Islamic unity within the lands of the Empire. Yet even then, “for Filibeli Hilmi, seeking to anchor the Ottoman Empire in Muslim unity was quite explicitly a tactical move. There had to be a ruling nation, and that could only be the Turks”¹²⁷. Yet Şehbenderzâde, writing before World War I, considered as plausible the possibility of keeping the Arab lands within the Islamic Ottoman Empire by emphasising the Islamic unity of its Muslim subjects. After all, this unity had worked in one way or another for almost four centuries. Yet now, there was a fundamental change.

the necessary Muslim basis was to be provided not by the amalgamation (*ictima*) but a unity (*ittihad*) of various Muslim elements of the empire, in which the primacy of the Turks would not be put into question. All this talk of nations and elements puts this formulation squarely in the context of the

¹²⁵ Kara 2003, 116.

¹²⁶ Khalid 2001, 206.

¹²⁷ Khalid 2001, 208.

then contemporary notions of nationhood. This was not the traditional Middle Eastern rhetoric of the superiority of one group over another, where the groups in question would be defined in terms of genealogical descent or locality. This was the abstract national identity of the turn-of-the-century romantic nationalism. In the Ottoman context itself, it was a considerable change to claim ruling status for ‘the Turkish element’ as a whole¹²⁸.

It was significant that Şehbenderzâde regularly referred to the Empire as *Türkiyâ*. As Khalid points out, there was indeed an increasing focusing on Anatolia in relevant ‘Islamist’ writings in the early 20th century¹²⁹. Anatolia was becoming the centre of ethno-religious identity.

The CUP: A ‘political’ *tarikat*?

In his book on Talat Pasha, Hüseyin Yalçın described ‘the Committee of Union and Progress’ (CUP, *İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*) in the following terms: “The (Committee) of Union and Progress virtually existed as a kind of a *tarikat*, a religious creed (*mezhep*), and a religious belief (*iman*). The persons who entered the Committee in the early stages never lost their ideals and belief in it”¹³⁰. Apart from its metaphorical sense, Yalçın’s depiction contains also an actual dimension. According to a contemporary theorist of Turkish nationalism and participant in the events, the (formerly Jewish) Turkish Muslim, Tekin Alp: “The Turkish nationalists [through the *Genç Kalemler* (Young Pens)] are striving hard to give religion an ethnic character and to infuse it with a Turkish national spirit”¹³¹. According to their opinion, “the Turks cannot interpret the Koran in the same way the Arabs do and they base their opinion on the famous Koranic phrase ‘Live, each one according to their customs’¹³². As Alp states,

The philosophy of the [Mevlevis and the Melamis] is not far from being Epicurean. The idea of the Turks about God is different from that of the Arabs. The former have the same idea about God as that of their Jewish ancestors. Their God is the God of Revenge and you worship Him because you fear Him. The ‘*Makhafat Allah’ı*’, the God of Revenge, is the one the Arabs worship. The God of the Turks is the God of Love, the ‘*Muhabbet Allah’ı*’, whom they worship because they love Him¹³³.

¹²⁸ Khalid 2001, 208.

¹²⁹ Khalid 2001, 208.

¹³⁰ Yalçın 1943, 10-11.

¹³¹ Alp 1915/1992, 35.

¹³² Alp 1915/1992, 34.

¹³³ Alp 1915/1992, 34-5.

In fact, the religious composition of the CUP command echelons was fully inter-encapsulated with Roman *batûni vahdet-i vücud* religiosities, above all with *Babağan* Bektashism, *Şems* Mevlevism and *Nuriyye* Melamism. Kara states that after the destruction of the *Yeniçeris*, Bektashism regained its fame and esteem as a *tarikât* only thanks to its multiple connections to the CUP¹³⁴. The core leadership and many CUP members would visit the *Pir Evi* at Hacıbektaş, the CUP naval officers decorated the handles of their rapiers with the Bektashi 12-sided conical hat, and the Bektashi CUP members spread the idea that Bektashism/Alevism was the real religion of the Turks¹³⁵. According to Yücer, the Bektashi Babas “played the vanguard role in taking and spreading the nationalist movement to the villages”¹³⁶. Sunar also argues that “... Bektashism is patriotic and nationalistic to the utmost degree. It is also hostile to the Caliphate. It considers that which is called Caliphate a fabrication and takes it to be an epithet expressing tyranny originating in the *Yezidi* [i.e., Umayyad] period”¹³⁷.

The second ‘*tarikât*’ in strength within the CUP was the third-period *Melamiyye*, with one of the Melami *halifes* of Seyyid Muhammad Nur ül-Arabi, Bursalı Mehmet Tahir, as a key proponent. The case of the *Mevleviyye* is of special interest, since it clearly demonstrates a correlation between the rise of its *Şems* branch and involvement in anti-Hamidian and pro-CUP political activity. The turning point in political orientation and participation in modernising activism coincides with the rise of the *Şems* branch at the Konya *Mevlevihâne* effected by Abdülvahîd Çelebi who was also initiated into the *Bektaşîyye*¹³⁸. The Hamidian palace became apprehensive about a variety of activities that followed Abdülvahîd Çelebi’s decision, such as the initiation into the *Bektaşîyye* of the majority of the Mevlevi Dedes who were connected to him, the influx of Bektashis into the Konya *Mevlevihâne*, the constant correspondence between the Hacı Bektaş *Pir Evi* and himself, and generally the fusion of Mevlevism with Bektashism¹³⁹. From then on, the palace began to apply coercion and constant

¹³⁴ Kara 2003, 325-6.

¹³⁵ Gölpınarlı 1983, 277.

¹³⁶ Yücer 2003, 49.

¹³⁷ Sunar 2003, 23.

¹³⁸ Abdülvahîd Çelebi entered the *Bektaşîyye* by way of İzmirli Rûhî Bey Baba (1828-1898) and received his Bektashi *Halife* title from Mehmet Ali Hilmi *Dedebaba* (d. 1907) of the Bektashi *Şahkulu Dergâh* at Merdivenköy/Istanbul (Küçük, Sezai 2003, 72).

¹³⁹ Küçük, Sezai 2003, 364.

surveillance measures against Abdülvahîd Çelebi, which lasted until his death in 1907. “His son, Abdülhalim Çelebi, who occupied his post after his death, did not stay out of politics, and he sent a letter of support for the CUP to the Assembly of the Notables, to the Presidency of the Parliamentary Assembly, and to the Command of the Action Army (*Hareket Ordusu Kumandanlığı*)¹⁴⁰. Like his father, Abdülhalim Çelebi had also been initiated into the *Bektaşîyye*¹⁴¹. As we will see, Abdülhalim Çelebi is a critical personality vis-à-vis the relation between the *Mevlevîyye* and Kemalism. His successor, Veled Çelebi (İzbudak), was one of the two or three Mevlevîs who can be shown to have had a formal membership of the CUP¹⁴². After the establishment of the main opposition party against the CUP, the *Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası* (Liberty and Entente Party) in 1912, Veled Çelebi exerted serious efforts in his capacity in order to safeguard the political dominance of the CUP by advising the local *Mevlevî şeyhs* to stay out of politics and remain loyal to the CUP-led government¹⁴³. Veled Çelebi’s evaluation of the religious views of the distinguished *Şems* branch *Şeyh*, Hüseyin Fahreddin Dede (d. 1911 AD), whom he described as someone “who assembled in himself all the beauties/religious moral qualities that the people want to see in a Mevlevî adept in the spiritual mysteries”¹⁴⁴, is indicative of his own proximity, or at least his positive attitude, towards the *Şems* branch. A point of unity between Veled Çelebi and the *Şems* branch was the emphasis on Turkish. Veled Çelebi was himself an expert in Turkic dialects.

Other key Ottoman Sunni *tarikats* such the *Kadiriyye*, the *Rufaiyye*, *Halvetiyye*, *Uşşakiyye*, and *Sünbülüyye* were also represented within the CUP¹⁴⁵. The late 19th-century *Uşşakiyye* showed a very close proximity to the *Bektaşîyye*. According to Mahmut Erol Kılıç, without being Bektashi as such and remaining exoterically Sunni, the *Uşşakiyye* developed an esoteric resemblance to the *Bektaşîyye*¹⁴⁶. As Hanioglu points out, we witness an

¹⁴⁰ Küçük, Sezai 2003, 368.

¹⁴¹ Küçük, Sezai 2003, 72.

¹⁴² Yücer 2003, 671. The other Mevlevî member was Ali Pashazâde Dervîş Kemâleddin Bey.

¹⁴³ Kara, İsmail 2001, 219-20.

¹⁴⁴ Küçük, Sezai 2003, 159. Veled Çelebi was also fully aware and appreciative of the Bektashi-Melami affiliation of Fehreddin Dede’s father, Hasan Nâfîz Dede (d. 1861).

¹⁴⁵ Hanioglu 1985, 118-21.

¹⁴⁶ Interview with author in late July 2004. Of the six *Uşşakiyye* branches, at least three, the *Muslihiyye*, the *Câhidiyye* and the *İrşâdiyye*, were related to 19th-century

almost systematic absence of the *Nakşibendiyye* in the ranks of the *İTC*: “the relation of that *tarikât* with the Young Turks was not a positive one”¹⁴⁷ – this situation would be accentuated after the establishment of the Atatürkist Republic.

Apart from the Sabataists (*dönmes*)¹⁴⁸ and the various Ottoman *tarikats*, the CUP enjoyed a very strong relation to another politico-religious organisation, namely Freemasonry. Most members of the core cadre of the CUP were Freemasons¹⁴⁹. The Italian invasion of Libya (1911-1912 AD) and the anti-Christian-Orthodox Western-imperialist-fermented Balkan Wars (1912-1913 AD) constituted a watershed as regards both the abandonment of the *ittihad-ı anasir* (‘union of elements’) policy - which promulgated equality between the different groups in the Empire - in favour of Turkism and the gradual de-emphasisation of CUP relations with Freemasonry. Koloğlu describes the development of the nationalist trend within the CUP as “the formula for the non-Freemason members of the CUP”¹⁵⁰.

Although Hülya Küçük erroneously, or, not to say, deleteriously, attempts to ascribe to it a Bektashi character, the *Tarikat-i Salâhiyye*, a religio-political organisation which opposed the Nationalists during the War of Independence, had nothing to do with it either philosophically or institutionally. The *Tarikat-i Salâhiyye*’s politico-religious character was a combination of Western-type individualistic liberalism and Islamism, with a political dependency on the British and the palace. An intelligence report prepared by the Turkish Foreign Ministry in 1930 on the issue of anti-Kemalist personalities and organisations states: “The true nature of the *Tarikat* was nothing but an Islamic Freemasonry which stemmed out of and fully imitated Freemasonry. This *Tarikat*, which was formed to oppose Freemasonry in its form that followed the declaration of the Second Constitutional Period, was pro-Caliphate and pro-Pan-Islamist”¹⁵¹. On August 19, 2004 Bülent Çukurova, a key expert on the period 1918-1922

Bektashism (Yücer 2003, 209-229). These three branches spread in Rumeli, in the south Marmara region, and in Western Anatolia, especially along the Aegean coast. Two of its other branches, which exhibited a connection to the *Nakşibendiyye*, namely, the *Cemâliyye* and the *Salâhiyye* were located mainly in Istanbul - although that presence was diminishing in the 19th century.

¹⁴⁷ Hanioglu 1985, 118.

¹⁴⁸ Ortaylı 1998, 102.

¹⁴⁹ For a list of Freemason, Freemason-Bektashi and Melami members of the Young Turks see Koca 2001. For a detailed presentation and analysis of this subject see Koloğlu 2002.

¹⁵⁰ Koloğlu 2002, 237-44.

¹⁵¹ Tunçay 1990, 434.

with access to intelligence documents and unpublished memoirs, wrote to me: “The *Tarikat-ı Salahiye* was not a Bektashi organisation. It was an organisation that was set up by circles around and for the interests of the Sultan”¹⁵².

Ziya Gökalp: The Roman Foundations of the Turkish Modernity

Among the Roman Modernists, we could say that Ziya Gökalp represents the last link of the chain which leads to Kemalism. Gökalp’s works can be said to constitute the intellectual substratum upon which, to a large extent, Kemalism rests. Indeed, “understanding Atatürk begins with understanding Gökalp”¹⁵³. Unfortunately, mainly for political reasons, the enormous debt that Kemalism owes to Gökalp has not been properly recognised.

It is important for our discussion to situate Gökalp’s thought within the secularisation problematic, and at the same time, comparatively assess its alleged points of conflict with Kemalism. On the latter issue, there are said to be three main differences between Gökalp’s thought and Kemalism: Pan-Turkism as opposed to Anatolian-centred Turkish nationalism; a dualistic civilisation-culture conception as opposed to Kemalist monism¹⁵⁴; and a religion free from state connection (including ‘control’) as opposed to Kemalist control over religion¹⁵⁵.

The early thought of Gökalp was formed under two major influences: Roman *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf*, and modern Western philosophy and science. From his early school years, he studied the works of Ibn Arabi, Rumi and the classical Islamic Aristotelians, Ibn Sina and Farabi. In the Roman modernist context, Gökalp was heavily influenced by leading Roman modernists of his time, like Namık Kemal, Ziya Pasha, and Tevfik Fikret¹⁵⁶. Later on he further studied in depth the works of the modern Western Enlightenment philosophers.

In a tripartite series of articles (25/9, 2/10, 9/10/1922) under the overall title ‘Philosophical Testaments’ in his periodical *Küçük Mecmua* (The Small Periodical), Gökalp specified three major ‘inheritances’ of his religio-intellectual worldview: “My Father’s Testament”, “My Teacher’s Testament”,

¹⁵² I am grateful to Dr Çukurova for noting this to me.

¹⁵³ Asena 1981, 38.

¹⁵⁴ See, for example, Berkes 1965, 108.

¹⁵⁵ Davison 1998, 133.

¹⁵⁶ Şapolyo 1974/1943, 25, and Sav 2001, 20.

and “The Testament of my Spiritual Guide”. In “My Father’s Testament”, he points out how he was introduced to Bektashi/Alevi poetry (Shah Ismail, Aşık Kerem) (i.e., *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf*) from the age of eight, and how Namık Kemal became a patriotic prototype for him through his father. The key issue to which he directed his attention was the dichotomous trend in education in his time. On the one hand, the Ottoman students who went to Europe learned the modern sciences but remained ignorant of “national (*millî*)” knowledge, which then was essentially religious. The reverse was true for those who merely studied the Islamic sciences. According to his father, the finest scholars were those who learned both trends in depth and in detail. The key idea behind this ‘Inheritance’ was the differentiated unity of West and East.

Gökalp’s “Teacher’s Testament” was the most important as far as modernisation and political action is concerned. It relates to his high school years, when he was reading modern natural sciences as well as *kelam* and *tasavvuf*. This period constituted a major personal intellectual-psychological crisis for the young Ziya. His highest ideal was his desire to see humanity (*insanlık*) prevailing in the world, and to save the ‘lethargic’ Turkish nation. In his view, neither the natural sciences as such, which turn man into a mere machine, nor *tasavvuf* in itself could actualise his highest ideal. His hope came from a Roman Christian Greek (*Rum*), Dr Yorgi, who opened up his intellectual horizons. Gökalp describes Dr Yorgi as an interesting man who, despite being a doctor, believed that, except for laxatives, medicine was of little value. Serving as a philosophy teacher in Gökalp’s school at Diyarbakır, Dr Yorgi had first-hand knowledge of the Anatolian populations, since he had travelled in Anatolia for many years as a military doctor. He had a deep knowledge not only of European philosophy and French literature, but also of the emerging new Turkish literature. Dr Yorgi played a critical role in forming Gökalp’s view that “the highest ideal is the nation and freedom”¹⁵⁷. It will be argued here that Dr Yorgi’s most important contribution to Gökalp’s thought and, as we will see, indirectly to Kemalism, was his insistence on the need to focus not on Westernisation as such, but on modernisation, which should be in accordance with the social and cultural realities of the Turkish nation and society. Interestingly, in turn, this is something in which Greek modernisation has failed miserably.

Gökalp describes a meeting with Dr Yorgi in Istanbul some years before the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. Clearly exhibiting the Roman undifferentiated soul-body unity, Dr Yorgi advised Gökalp and his friends as follows:

¹⁵⁷ Şapolyo 1974/1943, 33.

The Turkish youth wants to make a political revolution, and to set up a constitutional monarchy based on a parliament. This is a goal to be praised. Yet there is something else: a revolution cannot happen by mere imitation. *A revolution in Turkey must be in harmony with the Turkish national soul and national social life.* The future constitution must be a part of the soul of the Turkish nation! *It must be harmonious with the social structure! Otherwise, the coming revolution could bring harm to the nation.* What is needed, above all, in order to prepare a proper constitution is to conduct research on the psychological and sociological [traits] of the Turkish nation. Without a doubt, you know little of the prospective revolutionaries. Have they done the necessary research on the Turks? Is the political programme they have prepared based on that research? In short, have they started their movement prepared in a scientific manner?¹⁵⁸.

“Exactly as with my father’s testament, I never forgot my teacher’s testament. The proof for this is that, starting from that day, I began, above all, to study the general principles of those sciences in order to be able to conduct research on the sociology and psychology of the Turkish nation”¹⁵⁹. Indeed, some years after the 1908 Young Turk revolution, the CUP officially sponsored detailed research on rural Anatolian religious beliefs and the Türkmen tribes (*aşirets*)¹⁶⁰, the findings of which were published only in Atatürk’s years. This represented, by way of Rousseau’s concept of ‘culture’, the Gökalpian and later Kemalist principle of *halkçılık* (populism), ‘the movement towards the people’. During his Istanbul meeting with Dr Yorgi, Gökalp argued that a political revolution would be incomplete without a social one. This Roman approach is religio-philosophically commensurable both with Roman Christianity and Islam, and Rousseau’s dictum that *politics and culture must be studied together*. In truth, *the modernisation path of the Roman Dr Yorgi underpins not only Gökalp’s thought but essentially the Kemalist revolution*.

After a very painful period, Gökalp managed to reach a dynamically evolving modernisation scheme which united modernisation and Turkish Islam. In fact, Gökalp’s insightful scheme of a differentiated unity between international civilisation and national culture constitutes the essence of the Kemalist Revolution. According to Safa, there was not a single Kemalist revolutionary reform outside of this civilisation-culture schema¹⁶¹. Zürcher aptly considers the essentially Gökalpian dyad ‘international civilisation - national culture’ found in Tekin Alp’s analysis of Kemalism as a mark of

¹⁵⁸ Şapolyo 1974/1943, 34, emphasis added.

¹⁵⁹ Şapolyo 1974/1943, 34.

¹⁶⁰ See, for example, Birdoğan 1995.

¹⁶¹ Safa 1997/1938, 100.

“the archetypal Kemalist”¹⁶². In order to understand the Roman substratum in Gökalp’s thought, it is essential to remember the Roman conception of the Trinity as an inter-encapsulation between a tripartite Universal whole, in which all three Singular constituents (Faces/Persons) share a common essence but at the same time retain their individuality in their non-sharable *hypostases*. This differentiated whole is reflected in both being as such and within the human being as monad, dyad, and triad in terms of the unified human being, soul-body, spirit/heart-soul/reason-body/senses. From Gökalp’s discussion of the ‘interaction’ between civilisation and culture, it is clear that he essentially talks about the Roman concept of inter-encapsulation.

Gökalp understands the notions of civilisation and culture in a way which is in line within the Roman logic of correlation of ‘both ... and ...’, which sub-includes the ‘either ... or logic ...’¹⁶³. In the Gökalpian scheme, civilisation and culture are both the same and not the same at the same time: a dualistic monism. From the point of view of a properly developed society which has established a harmony between civilisation (international) and cultural (national), the two concepts are identical and can be used interchangeably. After their proper integration, they appear to be identical because both of them are constituted by and address the same eight spheres of social life, i.e., “religious, moral, legal, intellectual, aesthetic, economic, linguistic, and technological spheres of social life. In the same manner that the name *culture* is given to the *whole* of these eight spheres of social life, it is also called *civilisation*”¹⁶⁴. This provides for the holistic monism of Gökalp’s politico-social schema.

Yet while the Gökalpian scheme is monistic, this is not an essentialist monism but a Roman one based on the notion of unviolated multiplicity-in-unity. This conception essentially instils the notion of dynamic change into the Gökalpian scheme, since providing that their unity is taken for granted, civilisation and culture could be intellectually seen as separate. According to Gökalp, civilisation is “the sum total of social institutions shared in common by several nations that have reached the same level of development”¹⁶⁵. Moreover, civilisation is rationally created by the conscious actions of human beings. Yet Gökalp’s concept of reason does not totally coincide with the Enlightenment’s merely instrumental reason, but more with the Helleno-Roman one: “the reason/logic of today began with

¹⁶² Zürcher 2000, 178.

¹⁶³ See Chapter 1.

¹⁶⁴ Gökalp 1923a., 19.

¹⁶⁵ Gökalp 1923a., 104.

Aristotle”¹⁶⁶. It is both universal and society-specific: “the reason of every civilisation is a general ordering [principle, an ‘orderer’] which binds together in a logical manner all the other institutions, i.e., religion, morals, justice, arts, language, economy, and the technical institutions/technology”¹⁶⁷. In that respect, civilisation is “the sum total of concepts and techniques developed according to certain methods and *transmitted* from nation to nation”¹⁶⁸. Civilisation is essentially composed of ideals. In other words, civilization represents the modern secularised version of the Roman religious Universal. Culture, on the other hand, comprises what is specific to a nation. It is not about ideas but about emotion/feeling. Culture can never transcend the totality of a nation (*millet*). In other words, culture constitutes the national dimension of his schema, or in philosophical terms, the Singular(s). The Gökaltipian ‘culture’ is but the modern secularised expression of the Roman religious hypostatic Singular.

Gökaltip’s attention to national culture is not confined to mere love for the ancient Central Asian Turkish past. When he urges that research be conducted into the ‘civilisation of the people’ (*halk medeniyeti*) (“the organisation, philosophy, morals, jurisprudence, literature, dialects, economics and ethnic/tribal groups of the Turkish people”)¹⁶⁹, he essentially concentrates on their present state as constituents of the national culture. The same is true of civilisation. For Gökaltip, a person who worships European or Arabic-Persian civilisation is not aware of the national culture, just as a mere admirer of the ancient Turkish culture could not comprehend the current Turkish culture¹⁷⁰. As Aslanoglu aptly points out, this is Atatürk’s own approach on the subject¹⁷¹.

The dualistic monism of the Gökaltipian schema is also reflected in the conception of the relation between the intellectual and the people. Being primarily in touch with international civilisation, the intellectual (the Rousseauian ‘philosopher’) in his individual knowledge suffers from a kind of asomatous cosmopolitanism. This constitutes a major obstacle to human and national realisation. For Gökaltip, this contradiction should be removed: “When ‘individual knowledge’ reflects the national culture, then it is

¹⁶⁶ Gökaltip 1995, 103.

¹⁶⁷ Gökaltip 1995, 103.

¹⁶⁸ Gökaltip 1923a., 106, emphasis ours.

¹⁶⁹ Aslanoglu 2006, 65 quoting Gökaltip, Ziya (1913), “Halk Medeniyeti – 1 – Başlangıç” [“People’s Civilisation – 1 - Beginning], *Halka Doğru* [Dergi], Yıl 1, Sayı 14, (1329/1913).

¹⁷⁰ Aslanoglu 2006, 64 quoting Gökaltip, Ziya (1916), Milli Terbiye – 1 [National Education - 1], *Muallim* [Dergi], 15 Temmuz 1332/1916, 14.

¹⁷¹ Aslanoglu 2006, 64.

reliable and enlightening. Yet in nations whose national culture has not been identified, most individual knowledge has no relation to national culture”¹⁷². The true intellectual harmoniously unites himself/herself and the people, i.e., international civilisation and national culture¹⁷³. The intellectual should ‘descend’ to the people both to be educated in the national culture from the people and to transmit international civilisation to the people. In Rousseauian terms, the philosopher should be both philosopher and citizen. And this is a problem Rousseau was unable to solve in the mere dualist Frankish Western context. At the same time, the people should also move towards the intellectual, i.e., toward international civilisation.

As Aslanoğlu aptly points out, Atatürk had a very similar view on the subject¹⁷⁴. In his address to the youth of Konya in March 20, 1923 - in reality revealing the Gökaltipian civilisation-culture ideological substratum of the Turkish Republic - Atatürk stated:

At last, here we come to the real point of our analysis. We can see that we [in the late Ottoman Empire] could not bring the people towards our aims either with the first method or with tyranny and despotism. Why? In order to be successful in this respect, a natural harmony between the intellectuals (*aydın*) and the mentality and the aims of the people needs to exist. In other words, the ideals with which the intellectual class will inspire the people need to be taken from the people’s soul (*ruh*) and conscience (*vicdan*). However, did it happen like this in our country? Are those inspirations of our intellectuals *ideals* that were taken from the depths of our nation’s soul? Without a doubt, they are not. There are good ideas among our intellectuals. Yet in general, our mistake is such that we must many times over take our nation, our history, our traditions, our special characteristics and our own needs as the basis for our studies and our readings. Maybe our intellectuals know the whole of the world and all the other nations; however, *we do not know ourselves*”¹⁷⁵.

In Gökaltip’s thought, the inter-encapsulation ‘civilisation-culture’ displays the anti-imperialistic and self-defending spirit of unity-in-difference. This inter-encapsulation constitutes the very source of human identity. In the old civilisation, which was the civilisation of Eastern Rome (‘Byzantium’)¹⁷⁶,

¹⁷² Aslanoğlu 2006, 65 quoting Gökaltip, Ziya (1916), Milli Terbiye – 1 [National Education - 1], *Muallim* [Dergi], 15 Temmuz 1332/1916, 16-7.

¹⁷³ Aslanoğlu 2006, 57.

¹⁷⁴ Aslanoğlu 2006, 65.

¹⁷⁵ Aslanoğlu 2006, 65, quoting from Naci, Fethi, *Atatürk’ün Temel Görüşleri* [The Fundamental Views of Atatürk], 1968, 140-141.

¹⁷⁶ Gökaltip 1923b., 265.

the hegemonic ideal was religious in nature. In modernity, the ideal of international civilisation has been transformed into a modern secular scientific one. Gökalp conceptually divides modern (Western) international civilisation into two levels, one “of the society” and one “of the community”¹⁷⁷. The former level, which Gökalp terms civilisation as such, includes things that do not bear “the stamp of the Cross”, are apolitical and common to all humanity. As such they can be shared by “the civilisation of the community”, which represents the ideal of ‘culture’. It is not Western culture that the Turks must share but Western civilisation i.e., positive sciences, industrial technology and division of labour¹⁷⁸. For him, in any period, civilisation is like a dress that nations wear¹⁷⁹. Every culture shapes the “dress” of the civilisation that it adopts by its own idiosyncrasies. This is but the *tasavvuf* dictum: ‘the water takes the colour of the cup’.

Following Rousseau, he believed that the necessary condition for the successful adoption by a culture of the externalities of international civilisation is the continuous presence of a cultural consciousness that retains its own distinctiveness. That is why Gökalp warned against modernisation of the type of the westernophile-liberals that would follow blindly “Europeanization to its cultural roots”¹⁸⁰. That happened in the *Tanzimat* period, with its statesmen forcing “Westernisation down to the most fundamental sources of our national personhood. As you see, ‘this was the biggest mistake of the *Tanzimatists*”¹⁸¹. On the other hand, he equally warned against the retention of the old religious (Islamic) international civilisation and its social institutions sought by the Ottoman Islamists. In reality, when Gökalp says “Yes we shall accept European civilisation unconditionally” or “We have to be disciples of Europe in civilisation”, he means essentially that the Turks will adopt modern science and institutions but be “entirely independent of it in culture”¹⁸².

In 1919, when Istanbul was under foreign Frankish occupation, Gökalp and many other CUP members were tried by the *Divan-ı Harb-i Örfî* (Martial Law Court) on charges of possible involvement in the Armenian insurrection/massacres. During his trial, Gökalp described

Roman Christians (*Rumlar*) who in the past had not known any other language except Turkish, [and] later sent their children to Athens to learn

¹⁷⁷ Gökalp 1919, 102.

¹⁷⁸ Gökalp 1923b., 266.

¹⁷⁹ Gökalp 1923b., 266.

¹⁸⁰ Davison 1998, 116.

¹⁸¹ Gökalp 1992, 145.

¹⁸² Davison 1998, 222-3.

Greek (*Rumca*). Armenians acted similarly ... *Every nation is compelled to move towards [the idea of] nationhood (milliyet) ... Nevertheless, according to your humble servant here, there is no distinction between the Turks and the rest of the nations as far as the degree of their worthiness is concerned. Every nation has a culture. [Yet] all national cultures are in need of the others.* In fact, a division of labour has come into being among the various nations. Naturally, every nation is pleased with itself for producing its own *particular culture (husûsî hars)* and its own fine arts. [Yet] the other nations take pleasure in the music, painting, poetry, literature and all kinds of fine arts of all the nations. As national taste (*millî zevk*) exists, there, in nationalism, exists an 'exotic' pleasure (*egzotik zevk*) too. In other words, this foreign pleasure (*hâricî zevk*) relates to the fine arts of foreign [nations]. ... For example, Pierre Loti derives pleasure from Turkish arts and architecture. Naturally, due to this 'exotic' pleasure, he loves Turkish culture. In the same way, just as the Turks take pleasure from French, English, German and all national cultures, everybody and all the various elements profit from every culture that happens to exist in our own country. *This is because so many varied cultures come into being within humanity. And humanity exalts*¹⁸³.

Here again we see a conception of an order based on an exalting Universal ideal (human civilisation), which incarnates and is formed by the multiple Singular (national cultures) in mutual solidarity, loving openness and respect. The Gökalpian perspective on humanity and its various communal expressions reflects a conception which, although secular, is commensurable with that of the Roman churches, as "the Church is necessarily a unity in diversity"¹⁸⁴. It is clear that in the Gökalpian scheme, the civilisation ideal as the essence-based Universal provides the normative *telos* ('exalts') for the culture ideal as the multiplicity-based Singular. The culture Singulars come into being and unity within the Universal humanity without violation of their own nature. As such, the Gökalpian scheme emphasised the particular, not separate, character of culture(s). The insightful Gökalpian distinction between *husûsî hars* 'particular culture' and *ekzotik zevk* ('exotic taste') generates the notion of a *barzah* among the various cultures, devoiding in that manner Gökalpian nationalism from any possible mere racial nationalist or mere cosmopolitanism elements. In this manner, every culture should be allowed to contribute to as well as share into the global being, while at the same time every culture has the right to self-protection when threatened by other cultures or the global order.

¹⁸³ Gökalp in *Divan-ı Harbî Örfî Muhakematı Zabıt Ceridesi Beşinci Muhakeme 14. Mayıs 1335* (27/5/1919) [Aslanoglu 2006, 63-4].

¹⁸⁴ Tataryn 1997, 193.

In his Roman thought, Gökalp directs his attention to the destruction of the classical Ottoman *sinallilia* and the sources of Islamism. It was the unconditional Westernisers of the *Tanzimat* who effected the politicisation of Islam by attempting to create a Muslim community (*cemaat*) along the lines of the Christian *millets*; these statesmen had confused political and religious authority¹⁸⁵. Although, according to Gökalp, they did not manage to create a Muslim *cemaat* along the lines of the Christian *millets*, they succeeded in mixing politics and Islam by placing the *kadıs* (judges), whom Gökalp perceived as having purely worldly state functions, under the Office of the *Şeyhülislâm*, which he saw as relating to spiritual matters only. Of course, the notions of the worldly *kadı* and spiritual *Şeyhülislâm* make sense only within the classical Ottoman *vahdet-i vücud* framework. As we saw in Chapter 3, the classical Ottoman *Şeyhülislâm* conducted his business in his private residency. The office became a government department only after 1826 with the destruction of the *Yeniçeri*, and its holder became a cabinet member. As Jäschke points out, the reforms that the CUP members and above all Ziya Gökalp supported in this area aimed at “rescuing the Office of the *Şeyhülislâm* from its worldly functions (relating to education and justice) and assigning to it purely religious duties, as well as modernising the management of the religious foundations (*vakıfs*)”¹⁸⁶. According to Bilici, “... with the increasing influence of persons like Ziya Gökalp within the CUP, as a result of the *laik*-ising reforms which had begun in 1916, the *Şeyhülislâm* was removed from the government and he was again returned to the position of a high state employee”¹⁸⁷. As Ocak points out, the various reforms in the final years of CUP rule show that the overall aim was to strip the Office of the *Şeyhülislâm* of its political-administrative functions, leaving it responsible only for the provision of religious services¹⁸⁸. Within this framework, he argued for the development of a religious organisation, which he calls “the mosque organisation”, that would be completely separate from politics. In 1922 he wrote that “as politics has so far not entered the mosques, no harm may come from the mosque organisation”¹⁸⁹. He perceived any combination of politics and religion as detrimental to both. He argued that “it was only when Selim I had again unified these offices [i.e., political and religious] that the decline of the Ottoman Empire ensued; its religious and political life began to deteriorate”¹⁹⁰. As Ocak

¹⁸⁵ Gökalp 1916, 206.

¹⁸⁶ Jäschke 1972, 54.

¹⁸⁷ Bilici 1989, 431, emphasis ours.

¹⁸⁸ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak in Yakut 2005, 8.

¹⁸⁹ Gökalp 1922c., 232.

¹⁹⁰ Gökalp 1922a., 226.

argues, “it seems that the Office of the *Seyhülislâm* was slowly entering the evolutionary road towards becoming the Presidency of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*) of the Republican period...”¹⁹¹. And this is a crucial point vis-à-vis the form of secularisation since, while it creates a separation dimension between the religious and the worldly, at the same time it retains a state-related religion ‘established’ and, in a sense, ‘controlled’. In this manner, Davison’s claim that Gökalp’s thought and actions lacks a ‘control dimension’¹⁹² altogether cannot stand. It is interesting to note that during at least nine years of the ten-year reign of the CUP, the Office of the *Seyhülislâm* (*Meşihat Dairesi*) was headed by persons of Akbarian *vahdet-i vücud* religiosity, either directly through Melamism or via Bektashism (pure or in combination with Mevlevism or *Ahrârî* (*Anatolian Hâcegân*) *Nakşibendism*)¹⁹³. It is most important to point out that while the entourage of Abdülhamid II was composed mainly of Arab *şeyhs*, we do not find any similar group of Rumelian or Anatolian *şeyhs* around the Sultan¹⁹⁴. The presence of Arab *ulema* in the Ottoman palace constituted a clear deviation from the classical Roman Ottoman religious tradition. It is significant that, on 24/8/1908, *The Times of London* wrote: “The higher echelons [of the Ottoman state] were enemies of the Young Turks. ... The heads of the reform movement belonged to the low ranks of the Army and the Navy, and the low and middle strata of state employees, of the free professions and of the *ulema*”¹⁹⁵. According to Clayer, gradually after the mid-19th century there was an influx of what she calls ‘heterodox’ *kadıs* (primarily of the *Babağan Bektaşîyye*, the *Gülşeniyye* (a ‘heterodox’ branch of the *Halvetiyye*) and of the *Rîfaiyye* (an ‘exoterically Sunni, esoterically Bektashi’ *tarikât*)¹⁹⁶) from Albania, particularly into the low- and middle-rank state *ulema*¹⁹⁷. Moreover, third-period “Melamism covered a wide space within the bureaucracy and among the *ulema*”¹⁹⁸.

¹⁹¹ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak in Yakut 2005, 8.

¹⁹² Davison 1998, 133.

¹⁹³ For a full list of the Ottoman *Şeyhülislâms* see Yakut 2005, 242-247. Those adhering to Roman *vahdet-i vücud* are Mehmed Cemâleddîn Efendi (Nesimi 2008, 127), Mehmed Sâhib Beyefendi ‘Pîrizade’ (Küçük, Sezai 2003, 369 and Yücer 2003, 754-5), Mûsâ Kâzım Efendi, Abdurrahman Nesîb Efendi (Clayer 2000, 54), and Mustafa Hayri Efendi [discussed below].

¹⁹⁴ İsmail Kara 2001, 71.

¹⁹⁵ Ahmad 1999, 201.

¹⁹⁶ “From underneath every Rufai *Şeyh*’s headgear emerges that of a Bektashi *Şeyh*” [Kara 1999, 267].

¹⁹⁷ Clayer 2000, 53-4.

¹⁹⁸ Yücer 2003, 853.

It can be argued that the most important element in Gökalp's scheme in terms of opening the door to Kemalist *laiklik* was his position on jurisprudence, and particularly on the *şeriat*. In the period of CUP dominance, the strongest criticisms of the *şeriat* as a basis for state law came from Gökalp, who understood state jurisprudence as solely relating to the worldly. In his poem *Şeyhülislâm/Meşihat*, published in his *Yeni Hayat* (The New Life) in 1918 Gökalp asserted that "A state that does not produce its own jurisprudence and considers its laws as heaven-sent and unchangeable is not a state and its *independence* is doomed; *the world cannot possess an unchangeable being*"¹⁹⁹. In his poem *Devlet* (The State), also published in *Yeni Hayat*, Gökalp made a sharp distinction between the mufti, who should have the purely spiritual role of interpreting the Koran and the Prophet's *sunnah*, and state jurisprudence as essentially relating to the worldly and its social realities (*örf ve adet*, usage and customs): "However, law is a separate matter from religion, and is left in the hands of the rulers of the state. God said to the nation: 'When law is not in harmony with custom, it [should] change. Make [it] harmonise with custom!' In my state, the custom of the people is sovereign. No other power can limit it. The law does not rule over God; it is His Servant"²⁰⁰. In his article "*İçtimai Usul-i Fıkıh*" (Islamic Social Jurisprudence), published in the CUP-financed journal *İslâm Mecmuası* (The Islamic Journal)²⁰¹, Gökalp argued that a jurisprudence based on the 'exoteric meaning' of the Koran was basically dead, had no real power and needed replacement. The key reason for this was that religious understanding and its relevant sciences must be in harmony with worldly life. For Gökalp, "life – and society – encapsulates in its consciousness, its customs/traditions, its ideas, etc, which are controlled by *the laws of*

¹⁹⁹ Jäschke 1972, 14, emphasis added. As we shall see in Chapter 5, both principles, i.e., national independence and a world in constant change, are key Kemalist ideas. It is also most interesting to note that, not only - while this poem was included in Gökalp's original *Yeni Hayat* (The New Life) (1918) - in the 1941 edition, published during İnönü's presidency, this poem was removed, but the fact that the relevant page has been *cut out* of most copies of the original 1918 edition! Nor is it present in Toker's 1995 edition.

²⁰⁰ Gökalp 1995b./1918, 97.

²⁰¹ The leading writers of the journal included: the Melami *şeyh* Bursalı Mehmet Tahir; the 'soul' of the journal Ziya Gökalp; the renowned *tasavvuf* expert and later President of the republic's Directorate of Religious Affairs, who performed the death rites at Atatürk's funeral, Şerafeddin Yaltkaya; the expert on Bektashism/Alevism Besim Atalay, the future teacher of History of Religions and Islamic Philosophy at the *Süleymaniye Medrese* and also of History of Civilization and History of Islamic Nations at *Darülfünun*, Professor Şemsettin Günaltay etc.

nature; and those laws are controlled by *God*²⁰². The notion of a unity between the worldly and the religious through their ultimate dependence on God is as important for the form of Gökalp's schema of worldly-religious relations as is the notion of their separation through their different natures – and both notions operate simultaneously. It is conspicuously clear that Gökalp's modern Roman schema generates an 'inversed' classical Roman *sinallilia*. Although there are two separate spaces, the worldly and the religious, united-in-separation without violation of their separate identities, the overall framework is inversed, with now the worldly providing its overall character. Kemalist *laiklik* represented the actualisation of this conception.

Rousseau's lonely quest for religious content in order to fill his Republican structures had led him to the conception of 'civil religion'. Yet in the Frankish West this was but a philosophical exercise in political theory. Gökalp was more fortunate, since such content was readily available in an actualised form within his Roman Ottoman milieu. It was Islam which, as part of Turkish national culture, could be inter-encapsulated with his modern civilisation. The motto of the *İslâm Mecmuası* expressed this unity: "*Dinli bir hayat, hayatlı bir din* (A religious-based life, a life-based religion). This was nothing else but the Roman *vahdet-i vücud*.

In 1911 Gökalp published an article in the journal *Genç Kalemler* (Young Pens), discussing the theophilosophy of Muhyiddin İbn Arabi and its relation to modern thought. He rightly criticised the erroneous opinion that equated the Western notion of mysticism with *tasavvuf*²⁰³. Instead, he asserted that *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* was a thought system that is compatible with modern thought, representing what in modernity is called idealism. He described three successive stages in the *tasavvuf* thought-experience towards the Truth: the sensory world, the unity of the exoteric sensory and the esoteric *consciousness* (in his own words, 'the colour of the water is the colour of the cup'), and the highest state of all, in which the will strives to constitute those perfections which really exist, i.e., Ibn Arabi's 'immutable entities'. In Gökalp's opinion, those entities related to the Platonic 'ideas'. Gökalp argued that Western philosophy followed a similar path, from Berkeley's phenomenalism to Kant's insistence that 'objective forms are hidden from us', and finally to thinkers like Alfred Fouillée, Guyau, Nietzsche and William Jones, who, in his view, reached the understanding that ideals are 'ideas-forces', and that notions like hope, will and belief are forces bringing about the highest happiness through the

²⁰² Arai 2003, 138.

²⁰³ Gokalp 1911, 148.

creation of new values. In other words, Gökalp interpreted almost the whole of modern secular Western thought via the Akbarian tradition. At the same, such comparative interpretation intrinsically moved the emphasis *vahdet-i vücud* conferred on being from the pre-modern religious to the modern worldly - yet without annihilating the universal religious.

In my view, Gökalp's affinity to Durkheim emanates from the former's affinity to *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf*. Gökalp treats Durkheim just as he treats other modern Western theorists in the sense that he essentially interprets him via Akbarian categories. The key difference is that he finds his thought largely commensurable with the 'Turkish soul', *vahdet-i vücud*: "Gökalp, as a deeply religious and mystically inclined nationalist, found Durkheim's sociology attractive in providing a theoretical framework for Turkism nationalism because of its affinity to mysticism"²⁰⁴. As Yılmaz argues, Durkheim's main insight was that religion plays a cohesive role in group formation and in the consolidation of social institutions, particularly though common worship: "it is the life of the group over and above the lives of the individuals who make up the group"²⁰⁵. Yet "Gökalp's Culture-Civilisation differentiation is absent in Durkheim"²⁰⁶. As Aslanoğlu points out, the debate over the source of this Gökalpian differentiation is still unresolved.

In Gökalp, the modern civilisation category inter-encapsulates with the Turkish national culture one, which is partially constituted by the Islamic 'Sunni'- 'Shii' *vahdet-i vücud* theophisophy. In Gökalp, the dualistic 'civilisation-culture' schema 'ideologically' expresses a monistically triadic one as well, i.e., his notion of '*Türkleşmek, İslamlaşmak, Muasırlaşmak*' ('Turkification, Islamisation, Modernisation'). This Gökalpian monistic yet triadic conception of being based on 'civilisation-nationalism-religion' can be shown to be very much commensurable to *vahdet-i vücud*'s triadic monism of 'heart-intellect-body'. In Gökalp's scheme, the 'Turkification' element serves as a *barzah*, a bridge between the other two. The secular modern civilisation Universal is essentially based on the concept of the national and its multiple expressions. This represents the *humanity ideal* (*insaniyet ideali*), the highest one in Gökalp's schema, which provides it with its overall worldly character. It possesses an upper and a lower part, the latter of which provides the point of contact with the (Turkish) *national ideal*. This point, which schematically lies at the lower part of the *humanity ideal* and the upper part of the *national ideal*, is where the two parts continuously inter-encapsulate. At the same time, a similar transmigration takes place between the lower part of the national ideal and the upper part

²⁰⁴ Sirriyeh 1999, 137-8.

²⁰⁵ Yılmaz 2005, 101.

²⁰⁶ Aslanoğlu 2006, 64.

of the religious one. The religious represents the ‘lowest’ part both of the overall triadic schema and of the *national ideal*. The overall *hypostasis*-based monistic scheme unites the three constitutive elements of being, while at the same time permitting them to keep their own particular characteristics. That is why the Roman Turkish modernist vehemently fought against mere cosmopolitanism emanating *from* unconditional Western/Westernophile individualistic liberalism, represented by Britain and being nothing else but neo-Gnostic. At the same time, the newly politicised ‘Islam’ (Islamism) itself is not permitted to dominate the international civilisation Ideal. Yet spiritual Islam is a key constitutive part of the scheme. The whole schema is based on the notion of harmonious and unviolated multiplicity-in-unity between all three ‘human-national-religious’ ideals, which are continuously inter-encapsulated. As far as religion is concerned, this monistic inter-encapsulation is possible due to *vahdet-i vücud*’s acceptance of the ideal of humanity as opposed to the idea of a merely Islamic umma (*ümme*).

Gökalp’s nationalism was not based on race or blood ties²⁰⁷. Moreover, he was never a Pan-Turkist in the real sense of the term. As Falih Rıfkı Atay writes in his famous book, *Çankaya*: “[Gökalp] was by no means a political racist and a Turan-ist. He was a Turkey-ist (*Türkiyeci*) and a Turkey-oriented Turkist (*Türkiye Türkçüsü*)”²⁰⁸. In his 1921 work, Ahmed Muhiddin writes that any notion of political Pan-Turkism/Turanism in Gökalp was only of a temporary character and was put forward under the influence of (and as a counter-weight to) other ‘Pan-isms’ such as Pan-Islamism, Pan-Slavism, Pan-Hellenism, etc during WWI²⁰⁹. Any ‘Turanian’ ideals found in Gökalp rest upon an inescapable pre-condition: the national politico-cultural Turkification of late Ottomanism in the core territories of Rumeli and Anatolia²¹⁰. In 1919, Gökalp presented his alleged pan-Turanism as an Ideal:

One of my articles is called “What Is Turan?”. There I show that the Turan which can be envisaged today is a cultural Turan. In other words, the Ottoman Turks will create a culture. If after this the rest of the Turks accept it, then this is the cultural Turan. And this is in the interest of the Ottoman state. Because, at first, Turkism, which is the essence of Ottomanism, will progress in our own country, and of course the state will be strengthened; then, all the Turks will accept this Ottoman Turkish language ... ²¹¹.

²⁰⁷ Özdoğan 2001, 73.

²⁰⁸ Atay 1998, 369.

²⁰⁹ Ahmed Muhiddin 2004/1921, 112.

²¹⁰ Gökalp in Arai 2003, 145.

²¹¹ *Divan-ı Harbi Örfi Muhakematı Zabıt Ceridesi Beşinci Muhakeme 14 Mayıs 1335* (27/5/1919) [in Bayar, Celâl 1965, Vol II., 75-76].

Apart from his “Turan Nedir?” article, the other work which allegedly displays Gökalp’s ‘Pan-Turkism’ is his poem *Kızıl Elma* (The Red Apple). Yet the analysis of the poem by one of Gökalp’s colleagues, Kâzım Nami Duru reveals two interrelated dimensions. Firstly, the poem, which aimed to raise the level of Turkish national consciousness, has a very strong *tasavvuf* character. This is very important, since it shows Gökalp’s *vahdet-i vücud*-based ideal of ‘Turkish Islam’, a union of (*tasavvuf*-based) Islam with nationalism. Secondly, the reference to Turan, not Turkey or Turkistan, as the *patrie* of the Turks in that poem does not point to a geographical area but essentially conveys a *batini* (esoteric) meaning: Turan is not a place but the ideal of Turkishness to be sought after. The essential theme of the poem is social evolution based on the national ideal. As Duru says,

...The *Kızıl Elma* [as the national ideal], is nothing else but the Turkish national consciousness, and in order to reach it, love and self-sacrifice²¹².

The theme of *tasavvuf*-based love points to a national ideal that is at the same time universalistic and pan-humanist. This is also a reflection of the Gökalpian ‘human-national-religious’ schema. It is worth noting that the *Kızıl Elma* ideal existed both in official Ottoman ideology and also in Bektashi/Alevi poetry. As Görkaş shows, while in Ottoman political thought the ‘Red Apple’ meant a great goal of conquest, in the poetry of the famous Bektashi/Alevi poet Pir Sultan Abdal (ca. 1480 – 1550 AD), it meant mystical knowledge as “a characteristic pertaining to [Imam] Ali, who is transformed into a Shah because of it, i.e., it is love itself”²¹³. It is most interesting that the ‘Red Apple’ ideal has been present for centuries only in two nations, both Roman: the Greeks and the Turks. In the former, it symbolised Roman ecumenical ‘Byzantine’ dominion, being the earth-symbolising sphere that statues of Roman Emperors, like that of Justinian I (483 – 565 AD), held in their left hand²¹⁴.

The Gökalpian scheme relates also to two other critical issues: the Caliphate and the *tarikats* as micro-communal politico-religious organisations. In order to reach an informed understanding of Gökalp’s views on these issues, it is important to appreciate the hierarchical nature of his ‘human-national-religious’ schema. Within this triadic unitarian schema, the highest ideal is that of humanity, which is purely worldly in nature. In other words, the overall *telos* of modernity is to establish this ideal of humanity without violating the other two. Without a clear comprehension of this dimension of

²¹² Duru 1949, 12.

²¹³ Görkaş 2003.

²¹⁴ Kitsikis 2007b., 67.

Gökalp's schema it is easy to misinterpret his ideas, since the volatile politico-religious environment in which he lived generated the need for constant adaptation and reformulation of his thought. In my view, as far as pre-modern religious entities are concerned, the overarching ideal of humanity comes into play. Gökalp and the nationalist movement supported the idea of an Islamic internationalism as long as the 'nation-based ideal of humanity' had not assumed the core of the overall international order in practice. As long as it was or could be seen as an obstacle to the establishment of the humanity-national ideals, any type of religious and worldly entities would have to be either reformed accordingly or, if that fails eliminated²¹⁵. Although their elimination is not a necessary conclusion, the Gökalpian schema does not preclude it.

Gökalp was fully aware that the CUP's efforts to functionally separate religion and state would lead to a de-politicised Caliphate, which was precisely what he desired. This was perfectly clear during the heated debates between the CUP and the Islamists, particularly after the transfer of the religious courts from the *Meşihat Dairesi* ('the Office of the *Seyhülislâm*') to the Ministry of Justice – a move in which Gökalp had played the leading role. Many important Islamists, on the other hand, argued vehemently that the attempt to separate 'religion and state' would render the Caliphate 'non-functional' and that in Islam the functions of the Caliphate did not relate only to the 'other-worldly' but encompassed also the realisation in this world of 'what religion commands'²¹⁶.

By providing specific examples from early Islam, Gökalp argued in 1918 that politics and religion were to be kept separate from each other, pointing out the dangers from any mixing of their roles, something that had led to the bloodiest conflicts during the Ottoman years²¹⁷. As Boyacıoğlu states, Gökalp's views on the subject of the Caliphate coincide with Atatürk's views as expressed in his speech on the separation between the Caliphate and the Sultanate in the Parliament (1/11/1922). Even as late as January 1923, Atatürk did not preclude the possibility of the retention of a de-politised Caliphate as an international institution²¹⁸. After the abolition of the Sultanate and the proclamation of the Turkish Republic, he indirectly supported the Kemalist actions by arguing that "the present-day Caliphacy is a thousand times more powerful than it was in the past", because it was

²¹⁵ Gökalp in Berkes 1959, 305.

²¹⁶ Yakut 2005, 203.

²¹⁷ Yakut 2005, 203, quoting Gökalp (1918), *Hars ve Siyaset* [Culture and Politics] in *Yeni Mecmua*, III.

²¹⁸ Mahmut 1929- 30, 115, quoting Atatürk's speech to the people of İzmit at that time.

now liberated from earthly considerations and would be able to fulfil its religious function unhindered by political constraints²¹⁹. There is no documentation on Gökalp's actual view on the abolition of the Caliphate by the Kemalists. Yet, taking in mind Gökalp's view on the position of the pre-modern religious entities within the modern 'humanity-national' ideals and that most of the subsequent Kemalist secularising reforms would follow a Gökalpian rationale, it is unlikely that Gökalp would not have accepted the abolition of the Caliphate.

In the latter phase of his thinking, Gökalp's main political goal was the independent unitarian national state. No institution which endangers this goal is permitted to exist – if previous reforms attempts had failed. This precept is central to understanding Gökalp's ultimate position on the *tarikats* as organisations. As we have seen, he accused the *Tanzimatists* of combining political (legal) and spiritual matters under one office, with the aim of establishing a Muslim *cemaat* (community) along the lines of the non-Muslim *millets* of the Empire - he calls these latter also *cemaats*. In his opinion, this kind of organisation was incompatible with the modern state and synonymous with political separatism and the dismembering of the *patrie*. These *cemaats* possessed, to an extent, legal autonomy and prerogatives, something which is fundamentally at odds with the modern state, because

The aim of the modern state is to unite all its organs within its own organisation by legal ties in order to make them organs of public service or of private associations. In modern states public services are incorporated into official departments of the government. Private associations are constituted in accordance with the laws of the state and with the authorising permission of the state. Thus, their existence does not infringe on the political authority of the state ... The sociological criterion indicating the existence or non-existence of a political authority in any organisation is the existence or non-existence of a judicial authority²²⁰.

Gökalp also argued that, in contrast to an umma, “[w]ithin a certain nation ... these [non-religious] spheres of social life have to have a uniformity and unity”²²¹. In terms of the Western secularisation theory this represents the societalisation dimension, describing a process in which a kind of anonymous society, the ‘nation state’ is developed. In his essay “The Social Functions of Religion”, Gökalp distinguishes three types of *mores*: religious, political, and, cultural. Religious *mores* are the sole determinants of authority in what he terms primitive societies, i.e., umma collectivities.

²¹⁹ Gökalp 1922a., 227.

²²⁰ Gökalp 1916, 205-206.

²²¹ Gökalp 1922a., 224.

In these conditions, the umma functions both as state and nation. In organic societies functional differentiation in institutionalisation gives rise to political and cultural *mores*. Gökalp conceptualises these three types of *mores* as existing independently of one another. For him, religious *mores* colour the institutions to which they are related with a supernatural and sacred power and quality: "This power may be useful in its relation to institutions which are relatively spiritual and represent the collective consciousness of society, but it becomes harmful when it is extended to worldly or secular, and especially to material, institutions because it prevents these institutions from adapting themselves to the expediences of life"²²². In organic societies, religious *mores* continue to function, but for him, cover or should cover "*only those ideals and sentiments which have to remain spiritual and sacred*. They do not extend over those institutions which are of a worldly and secular character. The latter institutions derive their power and role either from political or from cultural *mores* and evolve with the expediences of life"²²³. Here we clearly see that in the Roman Gökalp's view, precepts (the 'social differentiation' dimension) which are pivotal within Western secularisation theory, while they produce worldly-religious separation, do not also have the effect of privatising the religious in a free Akbarian milieu. Instead of producing privatisation, as in the Western secularisation theory, Gökalp perceives these three *mores* that exist in modern life as each possessing its own space. "Each of them performs its function in its own field independently. Therefore, we should seek the functions of religion in organic society because only there can we see religion in its own sphere"²²⁴. Gökalp concludes this 1915 article by stating: "*Religion is the most important factor in the creation of national consciousness as it unites men through common sentiments and beliefs. It is because of this that genuinely religious men are those who have national fervour, and that genuine nationalists are those who believe in the eternity of faith*"²²⁵.

Without situating these statements within Gökalp's triadic schema, it is easy to misunderstand the role Gökalp assigned to religion. For Gökalp, the *telos* of his enquiry is not the other-worldly but the social functions of religion, the former being the concern of theologians and the scholars of *fikh*, not of sociologists. So, according to him, religion must be interpreted within the framework of functional differentiation in organic societies. As becomes clear from his analysis of negative and positive religious rituals,

²²² Gökalp 1915a., 185.

²²³ Gökalp 1915a., 185, emphasis ours.

²²⁴ Gökalp 1915a., 185.

²²⁵ Gökalp 1915a., 192-193, emphasis ours.

both types of ritual play a role in silencing the “bestial ego” and consequently freeing the person from individuality “into a state of collectivity”²²⁶. It is the solidarity-generating function of religions that has relevance to nationalism. It creates a society-oriented solidarity-based substratum within the individual that is conducive to the creation of nationalism. It is this functional role of religion and not religion per se that Gökalp finds relevant to the creation of national consciousness. That his reference is solely to the functionality of religion in general, and not to any kind of religious character per se which Turkish nationalism should have, can be seen also in his statement that “[m]en who in ordinary times and places seek different gods are brought together at national times and places ...”²²⁷. In a society of vertical social ties and horizontal communal ones, Islam acts as a social glue, providing a kind of affiliation among individuals of backgrounds of tremendous disparity and geographical distribution. For Gökalp, Islam’s functional role is to prepare the ground for the seeds of nationalism by habituating the individual to a conceptual affiliation larger than his locality.

As far as religion per se is concerned, Gökalp sees it as having its own independent domain relating to the sacred. Its fundamentals – unlike external transformations in the various societies and historical periods – are not susceptible to social evolution like social institutions: “A religion ceases to be religion when its ultimate principles are not considered as absolute and unchangeable”²²⁸. As we saw in Chapter 1, the secondary importance of exoteric religious practices is a key notion in Roman Islam. Here we see that worldly (the exoteric) and religious (the esoteric) affairs are intrinsically separate not only from the point of view of the worldly but, most significantly, from the point of view of religion itself, i.e., within religion itself. This is a constant theme in Roman Gökalpian thought, where the worldly and the religious, while *sinallilistically* inter-encapsulating, are intrinsically separate from each other. For example, during the period when a predominantly Islamic Ottoman Empire was still a viable modernisation option, he argues that in Islam matters of piety are different from those of jurisprudence, and he calls for a division of labour between them within Islam itself²²⁹ – i.e., a separation between the worldly and the religious. “Piety has to do with that aspect of life that is sacred, and it is not permissible to mix earthly considerations with it, such as expediency, concession, and casuistry. The legal aspect of life has to be subject to

²²⁶ Gökalp 1915a., 191.

²²⁷ Gökalp 1915a., 192.

²²⁸ Gökalp 1914b., 195.

²²⁹ Gökalp 1915b., 200-201.

economic, hygienic, technical and many other secular considerations”²³⁰. Gökalp also pointed out that the Prophet himself had kept acceptance of Islam separate from any acceptance of political authority: “Our Prophet sent letters to each of the rulers of his time – to the rulers of Byzantium, of Egypt, and of Abyssinia. ... [proposing more or less]: ‘Your political organisations and governments will remain as they are and you will rule in your countries as in the past. The only thing I want from you is the acceptance of the faith and prayers of Islam’”²³¹.

Davison claims that “Gökalp cannot be said to have supported or even to have laid the groundwork for a policy that was intended to control religion”²³², as, in his view, Kemalism did. Yet this is a highly problematic interpretation, since it misplaces both Gökalpian and Kemalist *laiklik*-religious policies. In reality, Gökalp’s schema is only compatible with those ‘public religiosities’ which do not place the holistic ‘human-national-religious’ schema in danger. The religious remains public and part of the overall order as long as it does not oppose the higher place of the other two elements, the human and national ideals. From Gökalp’s discussion of the social role of religion we understand that as long as a certain religiosity and its organisation (*tarikats*) constitute a ‘private umma’, accept a merely exoteric *şeriat*, and in general threaten the *laik* national unitary state, it cannot be permitted to function. Thus the Gökalpian scheme is fully interencapsulated with *batını* ‘Sunni’-‘Shiite’ *vahdet-i vücud*, and incommensurable with *tarikats* like the *Nakşibendiyye-i Halidiyye*. Gökalp himself had personally fought against private umma-like *tarikats*, since many of them had turned into nests of laziness, and against the transformation of pious religious foundations (*vakıfs*) into private-profit-oriented businesses in the name of religion. In his article, *Tekkeler* (1909), Gökalp articulated a proposed course for the degenerate state that most of the *tekkes* were into, especially vis-à-vis spiritual knowledge. Standing between that of the official *Meclis-i Meşayih* (the Council of *Şeyhs*) and that of, mainly Celâleddin Dede (of Yenikapı *Mevlevihâne*)’s ‘Special School for the sons of *Şeyhs*’ (*Medresetü’l-Meşayih*) – the latter was seen as an attempt to confine Sufi spirituality into scholastic literalism –, Gökalp’s reform proposal was extraordinarily simple: the return to classical *tasavvuf* – i.e., religious re-Romanisation. As Zarcone writes, Gökalp “preferred to encourage the shaykhs to read the classical books of Ghazalî and Kusheyrî to help

²³⁰ Gökalp 1915b., 201.

²³¹ Gökalp 1922b., 227.

²³² Davison 1998, 133.

themselves in reforming their *tekkes* and experiencing the old way of being a Sufi”²³³.

As we will see, the closure of the *tarikats* by the Kemalists was based on that ‘private umma’ perception. It was precisely these latter forms of Islam that had to be abandoned and safeguarded against. So, *contra* Davison, the secular Turkish state’s ‘control’ over religion – which essentially related to its politicised forms not to religion as such - is both present and indeed inevitable in Gökalp’s view too. Yet one should not forget that the presence of ‘Ottoman state control over religion’ was far more severe during most of the 19th century, especially in ‘Islamist times’ such as the period of Abdülhamid II²³⁴, and even earlier, during Mahmud II’s reign with the banning of the *Bektaşîyye* - something that many Western and Islamist writers tend to forget. We also need to notice that the meaning of the Gökalpian/Kemalist ‘control’ dimension is not at all the same as that found in Western secularism, since in the Turkish context religion is part of the public sphere (without any form of a ‘Reformation’) while in the latter it is not. As Gökalp stated: “Thus, we see that Turkey, from the point of view of social structure, is democratic and thus modern. From the point of view of religion, it will be modern once it is secularized”²³⁵.

The Gökalpian triadic schema gives rise to his key religious concept, which would be gradually put into practice by the Kemalists from the early 1930s onwards: Islam as a Turkish national religion. Within our interpretation of Gökalpian thought, the conceptual basis of this policy represents the two ‘lower’ elements of the triadic schema, i.e., the national and the religious Ideals. The national represents a higher ideal, which encapsulates the religious without violating its nature, and while the religious gives rise to the national, it does not fully define it. Language constitutes a key element between the national and the religious. Through the usage of Turkish in religion, the real Turkish understanding of Islam would come to the fore, since the *mores* of the Turkish people would be able to be expressed in the way they interpret and understand religion. The Turkish people would be liberated from the influence of the Arabic-oriented and ignorant *hocas*. This should also be understood in relation to the new place of reason in

²³³ Zarcone 2007. Although sometimes he criticises him for overstepping the limitations of the applicability of philosophy, “Ibn Arabi usually mentions the great al-Ghazali with praise, calling him, one of our ‘companions’” [Chittick 1989, 325].

²³⁴ In his study of the Hamidian ‘secular’ schools (*mekteps*), Fortna vividly shows this type of control effected through schooling in a certain version of Islamic morality [Fortna 2000 and 2002].

²³⁵ Gökalp 1918, 144. By “democratic” here Gökalp means that the Anatolian peasants are not dependent upon feudal landlords.

education. For Gökalp, reason constitutes the Lydian stone which decides whether something is really religious or not²³⁶. Ibn Arabi writes: "Something that is rationally impossible is not acceptable in Islam, just as religious law cannot require something that is impossible"²³⁷. For Gökalp, religion is purely a matter of *vicdan* (conscience)²³⁸ - which is the Kemalist view too. At the same time, in society the principle of *ictimai vicdan* (social conscience)²³⁹ is national in overall terms and only partially religious. The Turkists sought a full Turkification of worship, including the translation of the Koran and Islamic *hutbes* (sermons)²⁴⁰.

Another critical dimension of the Gökalpian religious as well as overall socio-political understanding is the position of women. Gökalp emphatically insists upon the equality of men and women, a central theme of the basically *vahdet-i vücud*-oriented writers of *İslâm Mecmuası*. Moreover, as he states in his poem *Kadın* (*Woman*), the source of religious education should not be the state but essentially the family²⁴¹. But did there exist religious groups in Gökalp's time which could provide actual content for his triadic ideal-based schema and a policy of 'Islam as the Turkish national religion'?

In January 1919 Baha Sait published an article entitled '*Tasavvuf ve Hür Mezhepler*' (*Tasavvuf and Free Religious Creeds*) in the journal *Muhibban* (*Beloved/Ones-in-Conversation*)²⁴². In that article, Baha Sait argued that there existed two types of *tasavvuf* understandings and communities in the late Ottoman Empire: the conservatives (*muhafazakâr ehl-i tasavvuf*) and the revolutionaries (*ihtilalci ehl-i tasavvuf*)²⁴³. His description of conservative *tasavvuf* involved a religious-political-social understanding based on orders and prohibitions. We can say that it was based on a religious understanding that provided the basis for political and social control. According to Baha Sait, at the apex of this conservative *tasavvuf* stood the *Nakşibendiyye*. Revolutionary *tasavvuf*, on the other hand, was represented by the Bektashis and the Alevis. According to Baha Sait, these groups represented a freedom-based school of thought within the Islamic community, which to a greater or lesser degree kept themselves free from exoteric religious ties. Moreover,

²³⁶ Duru 1949, 98. The same was true for Atatürk [Atatürk 1989, Vol. II, 131].

²³⁷ Ibn Arabi 1997, 38.

²³⁸ Duru 1949, 97.

²³⁹ Duru 1949, 81.

²⁴⁰ Alp 1915/1992, 35-6.

²⁴¹ Gökalp 1995b./1918, 97.

²⁴² As mentioned in Chapter 3, Baha Sait was commissioned by the CUP to conduct research on the Bektashis/Alevis in the mid-late 1910s. It is important to note that the task was given to Baha Sait on Gökalp's recommendation (Tevetoğlu 1989).

²⁴³ Bulut 1999b., 194-5.

the Bektashi/*Kızılbaş* groups²⁴⁴, which constituted half of the Anatolian population, represented communities whose social life was based on freedom. Baha Sait states that the *Nakşibendiyye*, the *Mevleviyye* and the *Kadiriyye* had never been able to create a model of social life. Pointing out the difference between Iranian Shiism and Bektashism, he states that Safavism, which was an invention of Shah İsmail, had also not produced a strong and free social life such as the one found in Bektashism/Alevism, which had enabled it to withstand violent oppression by the Ottoman government for a long time: “These Turkish [Bektashi/Alevi] masses, who live the most modern social life among the free religious creeds, find nothing objectionable in knowledge and civilisation. Because they have lived in accordance with the national being (*varlık*) and they have understood religion from the point of view of national life and mentality, their capacity for *idealism* is very firmly rooted...”²⁴⁵. Thus, Baha Sait’s ‘freedom-based and revolutionary *tasavvuf*’ and its representatives fit the Gökalpian triadic ideal-based schema and a prospective policy of ‘Islam as the Turkish national religion’.

The notion of the Gökalpian/Kemalist ‘national religion’ unites within its religious understanding (without any violation of their separate identities) both the Universal-Human and the Singular-National ideals. Both these qualities have been present in Bektashism for centuries. Based on his observations of Bektashis in Ottoman Thessaly (Greece) in the 1810s, Leake says about them:

... and [they] are free thinkers in the practical parts of their religion, considering that everything is given to us for enjoyment, and therefore they smoke and drink and live merrily. It is their doctrine to be liberal towards all professions and religions, and to consider all men equal in the eyes of God. Though the *şeyh* did not very clearly explain his philosophy to me, he often used the word *ἄνθρωπος* [*anthropos*, Gr. human being], with some accompanying remark or gesture conveying a sentiment of the equality of mankind²⁴⁶.

According to Noyan (Dedebaba), “[a]bove all, Bektashism is a completely Turkish understanding [of religion]. It is completely Turkish in terms of its

²⁴⁴ In Bulut’s text, there is an apparent typographical error in referring to a “*Bektaşî/Karabaş zümresi*[group] as the followers of Hacı Bektaş Veli. Yet the error is corrected a few lines down in the text with the correct “*Bektaşî/Kızılbaş zümresi*”. Yet if not, it maybe constitutes a doctrinal ‘Freudian slip’ for the word, *karabaş* used to designate Orthodox Christian priests on account of their attire.

²⁴⁵ Bulut 1999b., 195.

²⁴⁶ Leake 1835, Vol. III, 284-5.

language, culture, feeling, thought, morals and philosophy. Everything is done in Turkish. The Bektashi is a person who loves his/her country, nation and the whole of humanity"²⁴⁷.

An exclusive relation of the Gökalian scheme and later Kemalism to Bektashism/Alevism would have left its dualistic monism, and indeed Islamic Romanity, unfulfilled as Turkey was not only 'Shii' - to use the Orientalist terminology for its Bektashi/Alevi communities - but also 'Sunni'. And as we have extensively seen, the *Mevleviyye* constituted the apex of Roman Sunnism. In a typical Roman fashion, the *barzah* between Turkish 'Shiism' and 'Sunnism' was its *Şems* branch.

Since in ecumenical Romanity's understanding dualism always inter-encapsulates with trinitarianism, the duality of *Mevleviyye-Bektaşîyye* is complemented by the *Melamiyye*, which in terms of universality is the apex of Roman *tarikats*, the *tarikats* of *tarikats*, which denies *tarikats*-ism itself. In the context of the late Ottoman Empire, this was the *Melamiyye-i Nuriyye*, described above. Geographically, the *Melamiyye-i Nuriyye* was very Roman: "Although the second- and third-period Melamis profoundly affected the history of Rumelian-Anatolian *tasavvuf*, they were not able to spread much into the other Islamic countries"²⁴⁸. In general, "When we look at the whole of the Balkans from the point of view of *tasavvuf* literature, we can say this: the region both raised thinkers on serious *tasavvuf* issues such as the *vahdet-i vücud* and Melamism, and it constituted the basis for 'opposition' voices such as the *Bedreddiniyye* and the *Bektaşîyye*"²⁴⁹. Most interestingly, even Hülya Küçük, in her book on the Bektashis during the Turkish War of Independence, in which she assumes an almost polemically vitriolic anti-Bektashi stance, portraying them as antithetical to the exclusively Sunni Mevlevis, ends up correctly acknowledging the reality of the common esoteric substratum of Bektashism, Mevlevism and Melamism: "In the *tasavvuf* tradition, the *tarikats* which closer to Bektasism, despite their competition, is Mevlevism – or even more correctly the *Şems* branch of Mevlevism... Another unifying element between the two *tarikats* is both being of a 'melami' disposition"²⁵⁰.

The appointment of the two Vice-Presidents of the first Grand National Assembly can be interpreted as a critical reflection of the inter-encapsulation between a Sunni-Bektashi/Alevi *batını vahdet-i vücud* and Kemalist

²⁴⁷ Noyan (Dedebaba) 1998, 111.

²⁴⁸ Yücer 2003, 593.

²⁴⁹ Kara, Mustafa 2001b., 4.

²⁵⁰ Küçük, Hülya 2003b., 158-9. This acknowledgement effectively undermines Küçük's entire thesis as expressed in her relevant book (Küçük, Hülya 2000).

*laiklik*²⁵¹. One of the appointees was Abdülhalim Çelebi, the head of the *Mevlevîyye*, who belonged to its *Şems* branch. The other was Cemaleddin Çelebi Efendi, the *Çelebi* Bektashi leader of the Alevis²⁵². Uniting both was the President of the Assembly, Mustafa Kemal himself... As we will see, this is the completion of the trinitarianism... It could be argued that the election of these two persons was an act of political expediency. Yet it could not be purely so, since the election of a *Nakşibendi* person could have been much more politically useful. In this sense, apart from its obvious practical political aim, it was at the same time a symbolic expression that Mustafa Kemal and his circle considered an Anatolian Turkish-language-based *batîni vahdet-i vücud* Islam as the highest form of Turkish religiosity and one that was fully harmonious with *laiklik* and the aim of raising Turkey to the highest level of international civilisation.

Indeed, this was the first solid expression of the future Kemalist policy of distancing Islam from its Arab and Persian interpretation and placing it in the framework of 'Islam as a Turkish national religion' in a Republican Sunni-Bektashi/Alevi unity. It is very important to note that the differentiation between an exoteric Arab and a *bâtîni* (esoteric) Balkan-Anatolian Turkish understanding of Islam was not a modern nationalist notion of Gökalp and Atatürk. It was constantly present from the 13th century onward, not only in Bektashism/Alevism but also in Sunni Mevlevism²⁵³. Gökalp understood and supported *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* from the point of view of the Sunni Hanefî tradition. Although, as Şevki Koca (an important Bektashi also known as Derviş Fecrî) has testified, Gökalp was not Bektashi/Alevi²⁵⁴, his nationalist and sociological works point to the primary position of Bektashism/Alevism as paradigms of religious Turkishness. Under the influence of his sociology, the Turkestans pushed for the cultural influence of Bektashism/Alevism on Turkey. The Gökalpian/Kemalist Sunni-Bektashi/Alevi *bâtîni vahdet-i vücud* Islam, as

²⁵¹ Pointing out that research on the *tarikats* was only partially published in that period, Tunçay interprets the election of these two persons as "an intuitive confirmation" of an long-standing impression at that time that the Mevlevîs were predominant in the towns and the Bektashîs in the rural areas of Anatolia [Tunçay 1999, 158 (fn 37)].

²⁵² Cemaleddin Çelebi did not really participate in the National Assembly's proceedings. On 17/8/1920, he appointed Hasan Fehmi (Ataç) as his *de facto* representative there.

²⁵³ For example, when Mevlana taught an Arabised person, he especially emphasised the need to concentrate more on the esoteric than the exoteric principles of Islam, since for him the essence of the exoteric (Islamic jurisprudence (*fikh*), grammatics, etc) is found in the esoteric [Eflâkî, Şemseddin Ahmet 1986/1318, 177 and 27].

²⁵⁴ From Şevki Koca's letter to me dated 8/11/2001 (21 *Recep-Hicri* 1422).

the religion of ‘national Turkey’, had the potential to solve within the confines of the republican state the Sunni-Bektashi/Alevi conflict which, if understood in the prevailing Orientalist terms of the times, pertained to one of the key concerns of the Islamic world of the time: the ‘Sunni’-‘Shiite’ antithesis. As contemporary Ahmed Muhiddin states: “The issue of the unification of the various Islamic creeds (*mezheps*) has become one of the most important problems of today’s [1921] Islam”²⁵⁵. In 1912 “the Ottoman Turks considered themselves simply as Muslims and did not take their nation as a distinct entity. The villager of Anatolia considered the [not yet fully nationally ideologised] word ‘Turk’ as synonymous with that of ‘*kızılbaş*’”²⁵⁶, i.e., Bektashi/Alevi. The pro-Kemalist 1922 Declaration of the head of the *Çelebi* branch of the *Bektaşîyye*, Veliyyedin Çelebi, addressed to the “*Tarikat-ı Alevîyye*”, uses the terms Alevi and Bektashi interchangeably and states: “The propaganda which seeks divisiveness within Islam, by calling the Bektashi *tarikat* ‘Shiite’ or other names, by no means has [and] cannot have any influence”²⁵⁷. The Declaration goes on to explain a central point of contention between Anatolian Alevism/Bektashism and Sunnism, in a manner which definitely seems to minimise differences and promote the notion of unity between the former and the latter in Turkey. The Declaration, which stressed the Turkishness of the Alevi-Bektashis, was fully in line with the future Kemalist religious policy of unifying Sunni and Alevi/Bektashi in Turkey. It is also clear from the Declaration that there was a general problem of anti-Alevi/Bektashi propaganda, which the Bektashis/Alevis, at least, tried to combat with a policy aimed at religious harmony²⁵⁸.

The inter-encapsulation between the Gökalpian schema and Kemalism was reflected in the close intellectual-political reciprocal relations between Gökalp and Atatürk. Gökalp actively supported Atatürk and participated in the formation of the latter’s revolutionary reforms. Not long after August 30, 1922, which marked the victory of the Turkish Army over the Greeks, Gökalp moved from Diyarbakir to Ankara. There, at Atatürk’s request, he worked as the head of the *Telif ve Tercüme Encümeni* (Compilation and Translation Committee) of the National Ministry of Education, which, as we shall see, was one of the most important departments of the new state²⁵⁹. It was there that the intellectual synthesis of the human-national-religious

²⁵⁵ Ahmed Muhiddin 2004/1921, 140.

²⁵⁶ Alp 1915/1992, 9.

²⁵⁷ Hülya Küçük 2003, 138.

²⁵⁸ For specific Alevi-Bektashi views on the issue of anti-Alevi/Bektashi propaganda and Alevi-Bektashi perceptions of their Sunni counterparts see Crowfoot 1900.

²⁵⁹ Şapolyo 1974/1943, 208, Bozdağ 1999, 196, and Kayaoğlu 1998, 217-225.

would take place. In that committee, Gökalp cooperated with Veled Çelebi (İzbudak) and Mustafa Rahmi²⁶⁰. Although his tenure of the committee's chair was short (April 14–August 11, 1923), Gökalp was very successful in bringing momentum into the publication of serious works concerning sociology, philosophy and Turkish history²⁶¹. It is important to note that the political-philosophical-religious outlook of the members of this third Committee followed the pattern of the previous one set up by Atatürk on June 25, 1921: almost all were Turkist members of the CUP with a connection to *vahdet-i vücud* religiosity either as such or through Freemasonry²⁶².

Gökalp supported Atatürk and his policies almost fully. He personally advised the Turkish youth to gather around Atatürk. “He very much approved of Atatürk, who was the national hero. Atatürk would realise in a more dynamic way Gökalp’s revolutionary ideals”²⁶³. For that matter, Gökalp resisted all attempts made by some of his old-CUP comrades to ‘resurrect’ that organisation. Instead, he became a member of Atatürk’s *Halk Partisi* (People’s Party). Not long after Gökalp came to Ankara, he met for the first time with Atatürk, at the latter’s request²⁶⁴. The very modest Gökalp was very much excited and at the same time very shy about meeting Atatürk. According to Bozdağ, although we do not have full details about that meeting, which lasted for a whole day, the issues of the Central Asian origins of the Türkmen groups and the Turkification of worship must have been prominent²⁶⁵. Around that time (possibly late 1922), Atatürk organised a meeting of about 40 persons with the purpose of replacing the Ottoman institutions and establishing a new type of state, “as he had thought about long ago”²⁶⁶. In that meeting, Gökalp argued that there were three types of polity: Monarchy, Constitutional Monarchy, and Republic. For him, since Turkey would be based on the concept of national sovereignty, it was necessary to establish a Republic²⁶⁷. After that series of meetings, “finally,

²⁶⁰ Şapolyo 1974/1943, 209.

²⁶¹ Kayaoğlu 1998, 225.

²⁶² The 9-member Committee was made up of: Yusuf Akçura (President (CUP-Freemason)), Hakkı Baha (Pars) (Secretary (CUP-Mason-Bektashi), Mahmut Esad (later Kemalist ideologue close to Şeyh Bedreddin theosophy), Veled Çelebi (CUP-Mevlevi (*Şems* branch)), Ahmed Ağaoğlu (CUP-Freemason), Ziya Gökalp (CUP-Ibn Arabi), Kazım Nami (Duru) (CUP-Freemason), Edip Bey (possibly Edip Servet Bey, CUP-Freemason), and Vahidettin Efendi (For the members see Kayaoğlu 1998, 202, and for their affiliations see Koca 2001 and above)).

²⁶³ Şapolyo 1974/1943, 220.

²⁶⁴ Şapolyo 1974/1943, 218.

²⁶⁵ Bozdağ 1999, 196.

²⁶⁶ Şapolyo 1974/1943, 218.

²⁶⁷ Şapolyo 1974/1943, 218.

the name ‘Government of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey’ was changed to ‘Republic of Turkey’²⁶⁸. Gökalp was a member of CHP’s Constitutional Committee set up in the autumn of 1923 to prepare the first constitution of the future Turkish Republic²⁶⁹. Atatürk met with that committee from time to time. Atatürk also assigned Gökalp the duty of explaining the principles of his new party to the nation. In 1923 Gökalp’s *Doğru Yol* (The Right Path), which explained the nine principles of the party, was officially published. On Atatürk’s wish, Gökalp was elected a deputy for Diyarbakır on August 11, 1923 in the elections for the Second Parliament. Not very long after that, Gökalp’s health began to deteriorate seriously and finally he was hospitalised. During his time at the hospital, the Kemalist newspaper *Cumhuriyet* reported daily on the health condition of the ‘only Turkish thinker’. Atatürk sent him a get-well telegraph on October 21, 1924. After receiving that telegram, which he read three times over, Gökalp became very happy and much more relaxed. In his reply, he asked for the publication of his last book, *Türk Uygarlık Tarihi* (The History of Turkish Civilisation). He died on October 25, 1924 and was given a full state funeral, which was attended by almost 30,000 persons. Until Atatürk’s death, Gökalp and his thought continued to be followed by the key Kemalist ideologues. As the testimony of leading Islamists during Atatürk’s time shows, Gökalp, whom the Islamists considered even more dangerous than Atatürk, was honoured. The misinterpretation and true neglect of Gökalian thought was a development of the supposedly-Kemalist İnönü era²⁷⁰. As the famous Kemalist author and member of Atatürk’s inner circle, Falih Rıfkı Atay, states: “*The only [group] which genuinely cooperated with Mustafa Kemal ... was the Turkists of the Gökalp branch*”²⁷¹. It is most interesting that the terms Atay uses the correct terms for describing the West and the Western ideologies that Gökalp’s Turkists and the Kemalists fought against, i.e., ‘Frankish’ (*Frenk*) and Frankism (*Frenklik*)²⁷².

²⁶⁸ Şapolyo 1974/1943, 218.

²⁶⁹ Soyak 2004, 180. Hasan Rıza Soyak remained at Atatürk’s side from 1924 until the latter’s death. He served as Private Secretary to Atatürk at the Presidential Palace, as an MP for Burdur, etc.

²⁷⁰ Given the misinterpretations of Gökalp’s writings which were widely used by the racist Pan-Turkist movement, it comes as no surprise that his works were not published in their original form during Atatürk’s years as the Kemalist Republic actively suppressed the Pan-Turanism trends: “Pan-Turkism remained latent rather than active in the first 20 years from the establishment of the Republic until the turning of WWII, ...” [Landau 1985, 113].

²⁷¹ Falih Rıfkı Atay in his book, *Cankaya* [quoted in İlhan 2005, 9].

²⁷² See Atay 1998.

Conclusions

The challenge Ottoman Romanity faced from the mid-18th century until well into the early 20th century was fundamentally different from the most serious of those challenges it had confronted in the past - like, for example, the early 16th century ‘Sunni-Alevi’ conflict. While in the latter case, the emerging conflict was essentially political yet without challenging the overall theophilosophical and cosmological predominance of *vahdet-i vücud*, the challenge present in emerging Ottoman modernity centred particularly on this predominance which was put under enormous pressure by, on the one hand, the Western Enlightenment trend and its concomitant religiosities (Catholicism, Protestantism, Neo-Gnostic mysticism), and, on the other hand, by an Islamist trend imported to the Roman lands from Asia, especially represented by the *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye* – and many times sometimes by the ‘alliance’ of both those two alien trends. The gradual resurgence of Romanity to a point of key importance - particularly clear in the Ottoman centre in the early 20th century - via the Roman Modernists and their *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* mentality and organizations facilitated in the last 150 years of Ottoman (Muslim) history the emergence of a particular kind of differentiated unity between secular modernity and religion that enables the two to separately co-exist publicly in a way that they do not in the modern West. The national *laik* Kemalist Republic came as the cumulative apex of this resurgence.

In 1823 the Phanariot Prince Alexandros Mavrokordatos declared that the Ottoman Empire was running fast towards its fall: “it will either be replaced by a national [Turkish] government like that of the Greeks, or be conquered by the Russians”²⁷³. A hundred years later, Prince Mavrokordatos’ argument proved true with a twist of history: the would-be conquerors were set to be Greeks - at least that it was in terms of appearances (for the Greek tragedies that followed were mainly the product of violently imposed anti-Roman policies by the modern descendants modern of the Franks at gunpoint, of course, with the collaboration of local Grequist leaders). Unlike Rigas Velenstinlis’ common Roman vision, the *Megali Idea* invented by the former Greek PM Ioannis Kolettis (1773/1774–1847) – the first Greek Prime Minister who got rich from holding that Office - represented Frankism and was Catholic in character²⁷⁴. The Roman Turkish leadership of the 1922 *Turkish War of Independence* or the *Greek Asia Minor Campaign* knew very well that it was fighting a Frankish-indoctrinated

²⁷³ Chistodoulou 2007, 149.

²⁷⁴ See *Prolegomenous Epilogue*.

Greek leadership subservient to the Western Powers. Immediately after the War of Independence, Atatürk gave an interview to a Western journalist, who began by saying:

“I would like to learn a bit about the war you had with the Greeks?” Cutting him short, Atatürk [replied]: “Sir! I don’t understand. Did you say with the Greeks?” [And he continued:] “Not long after [the War], on Oct 11, 1922, the Armistice of Mudanya was signed by İsmet İnönü on behalf of the Government of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, General Harrington on behalf of the British Government, General Monbelli on behalf of the Italian Government and General Charpy on behalf of the French Government. There was no Greek delegation there. This shows against whom the Turkish nation fought”²⁷⁵.

Atatürk’s aide, Muzaffer Kılıç, explains the following story: One day in 1922, Atatürk, who heard a lot of swearing and noise of biting coming out of the environs of the Presidential Palace, inquired about what was going on. What was happening was that an old army officer who oversaw running the works in the outer court of the Palace was hitting and swearing at Greek prisoners who performed paid jobs thereafter suspecting them of stealing cigarettes.

Then, Atatürk personally came down the doorway. As we were walking together with the prisoners towards Atatürk, one of them fell and lost his conscience from his fear after seeing Atatürk. Witnessing this incident, Atatürk became very saddened; he personally brought him about by washing his face with water and cologne. Making the incident his personal one, Atatürk became even more touched and, using an interpreter, he sent the prisoners away after apologising, giving them more packets of cigarettes and a certain amount of money. Even after the prisoners left with tears in their eyes and full of gratitude, Atatürk could not calm down. Subsequently, after the old officer was dismissed from his duties at the Presidential Palace and sent back to the Ministry of Defence, a more sensible person assumed his duties at the Palace²⁷⁶.

With the end of the 1919-1922 War, Atatürk was ready to actualise his revolution with the establishment of the *laik* national republican Turkey.

²⁷⁵ *Cumhuriyet* Oct 11, 1995 (in Babacan 2004, 279). During the War of Independence, the official organ of the Atatürk-led nationalists, *Hâkimiyet-i Milliye*’s articles and declaration were thoroughly and pervasively anti-Western – and, also, ideologically so. For a collection of those articles – some of which were written anonymously by Atatürk himself as ‘Chief Editor’-, see Bolluk 2006.

²⁷⁶ Yurdakul 1999, 79.

Samet Ağaoğlu once wrote about Gökâlîp that “he was a guide (*mürşid*), who was inspiring Turkish society to become Western, [yet] he was doing his job with the method, mentality, and soul of an Eastern sheikh”²⁷⁷. If Gökâlîp was Atatürk’s “intellectual father”, it was Atatürk who transformed the Roman ecumenical vision from the incorporeal into life, a life based on the national. And the *Ata* word found as the first compound in Atatürk’s own chosen name had another side, as we will see, to that usually portrayed (the literal and obvious one as ‘father of the Turks’). For one should not forget that “among the Turks, the words *Ata*, *baba* were used to refer to those who spiritually illuminate (*aydınlaticılar*), the *mürşids* (*spiritual guides*) and the *şeyhs*”²⁷⁸.

²⁷⁷ Samet Ağaoğlu in Ünüvar 2002, 29.

²⁷⁸ Noyan (Dedebaba) 1998, 197.

CHAPTER 5

THE MODERN TRIUMPH OF ROMAN DIFFERENTIATED ONENESS: THE KEMALIST REPUBLIC

Woe to them that go down to Mizrayim for help;... but they look not to the Holy One of Yisra'el, neither seek the LORD!... Now Mizrayim is man, and not GOD ; and their horses' flesh, and not spirit. When the LORD shall stretch out his hand, the helper shall stumble, and the one who is helped shall fall down, and they shall perish together¹.

And we were freed from the Turks
and became enslaved to mischievous people,
who were the impurity of Europe.
—The Roman Greek revolutionary General Makrigiannis (1797-1864)

There is one Justice in the world; and Justice is above Power.
—Mustafa Kemal Atatürk²

God is just, true and powerful...
Only when one serves the good and justice, he becomes powerful as well...
—The Roman Greek revolutionary general Makrigiannis (1797-1864)

Nations cannot exist without virtue and pain for the *patrie*, and faith in their religion.
—The Roman Greek revolutionary general Makrigiannis (1797-1864)³

Religion is a necessary institution.
It is impossible for irreligious nations to continue to exist.
—Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1930)⁴

¹ Yesha'yahu/Isaiah 30:1-3.

² Borak 1999, 9.

³ Makrigiannis 19??, 9.

⁴ Kılıç 2005, 564.

The occupation of Smyrna on September 9, 1922 by the Turkish National Forces marked to all intents and purposes the beginning of a new era. Concerning the Greek side, especially in the long run, while expressing his sadness for the human suffering of 1922, the holy Elder – and true Saint - Athanasios Mytilinaios castigates the Greek inability to theologise upon history and to approach those events not only in official commemorations but above all self-critically and come to understand that the Western coastal areas of Ionia, with Smyrna at their centre, were suffering terribly from sinful impiety towards Christ and His *Ecclesia*: “it is for this that that city suffered the most”⁵. By 1992, as the Elder stated, Greece had come to the brink of apostasy distancing itself all the more from the Lord Jesus Christ. We have already referred to the spiritual dimension for Christianity of the Kemalist’ struggle against neo-Gnostic Western Liberal Imperialism and its regional pawns.

Indeed, Smyrna had been a key centre of anti-Roman anti-Christian/anti-Islamic Western missionary activity. It is not accidental that while tons of wholesale Western lamentation tears have been shed for Smyrna, there is little attention paid to the burning, terror and destruction of towns and villages like, for example, in İzmit (1921) and Afyonkarahisar at the wake of the retreat of the Greek army. The burning of Smyrna was the work of an utterly anti-Roman mentality yet it ultimately worked for Roman justice purposes; according to most Western (particularly French eye-witness reports) and secondary Turkish contemporary sources, the fire began at the Armenian quarter and was the work of Armenians die-hards⁶. The French *L'Illustration* (Sep 30, 1922) states: “Ce sont les Arméniens qui décident à mourir plutôt que de souffrir l’occupation turque, ont incendié leurs maisons et engagé le combat avec les soldats Turcs”. In his relevant report the French Rear Admiral, Charles Henri Dumesnil, who had been instrumental in saving the French colony of Smyrna during the fire of the night of September 13-14, 1922, states that after various investigations:

Turkish newspapers began publishing some news on this issue, along with names and further evidence. While they remain silent about the Greeks, they

⁵ Elder Father Archimandrite Athanasios Mytilinaios (Lesson 1, Prophet Ezekiel, Oct 5, 1992). Accessed July 30, 2023. https://www.arnion.gr/mp3/omilies/p_athanasios/prof_izekihl/prof_izekihl_001.mp3. Like my own father who came to Greece from Smyrna (Uzun Ada) as a few months old baby, the Elder’s mother was a resident of Smyrna during those event - although she was not of Asia Minor descent.

⁶ See, for example, the French *Le Matin* (Sep 23, 1922) and the French/Turkish-owned newspaper of Smyrna, *Le Levant* (Sep 21, 1922).

hold responsible only the Armenians. Considering the habits and character [of the Armenians], I can comfortably subscribe to the view that indeed most of the responsibility belongs to them... [On the issue of the timeliest evacuation of their citizens before the fire, it is seen that] the sources of this information for the British are the Greeks, and for the Americans are the Armenians. This situation allows one to think that the General Consuls of these two nations were informed beforehand of the danger that Armenian or Greek arsonists would expose the city to. This is a case where Mustafa Kemal, who was hurt both materially and morally by this disaster, tried to minimise its publicization [(damage control/reduction)] with his main aim not to see such a disaster repeating itself in Istanbul too⁷.

According to *Le Figaro* (September 20, 1922), none of the refugees from Smyrna who managed to arrive in Rhodes put the responsibility for the fire upon the Turks. An eyewitness of the fire, the *Daily Mail*'s special envoy to Smyrna, Mr. Ward Prece states:

As I write... the city seems to form only one immense inferno, from which burst gigantic flames. The spectacle is terrifying... *The silhouettes of the bell towers of Greek Churches and the domes of the Mosques protrude on this river fire water...* The fire started on Wednesday at 2 a.m. afternoon in the Armenian quarter, which lies about a mile and a half inland. Few people paid attention to it at first. I was at that time near the port and, so much on the roof of my house, I looked in the direction of the Armenian quarter I saw two other fires, which did not cause no more worry⁸.

It may be that Armenian arsonists started the fire, yet, as the Kemalist Falih Rıfkı Atay writes, "it would not have been taken to its catastrophic conclusion, if not for [the likes of] Nureddin Paşa whom I know as a die-hard fanatic and provocative demagogue"; *Sakallı* Nureddin Paşa had been a protagonist in the massacres of Pontic Greeks. "It is clear from the "*Nutuk*" that Atatürk never liked Nureddin Paşa, whose leadership of the First Army [in 1922] came about as a matter of circumstance"⁹. Atatürk had first offered the leadership of that Army to Ali Fuat Paşa and Rafet Paşa who both refused as they did not want to serve under the command of İsmet [İnönü] Paşa. In the end, two of the most anti-Roman destructive elements came to work together, İsmet [İnönü] Paşa and *Sakallı* Nureddin Paşa... The anti-

⁷ *Documents Français Sur L'Occupation Grecoque Anatole*, edited by Enis Tulça, 171-173. Ankara : Center For Strategic Research, SAM Papers No:4/2002 (Aralık) (No:61 Date/Numéro d'archives: 28 Septembre 1922/E304-1/Turquie 55/127, Le rapport de l'Amiral Dumesnil sur l'incendie d'İzmir).

⁸ *Le Temps* (Sep 17, 1922, front page).

⁹ Atay 1998, 324-325.

Roman Turks and the anti-Roman Francophrone Greeks like the Greek Prelate of Smyrna, Bishop Chrysostom (who had urged from the beginning of the embarkation of the Greek Army in Smyrna the ‘drinking of Turkish blood’) had set themselves to exterminate one another. Ideologically, Chrysostom’s case constitutes a secularised version of the likes of Bernard of Clairvaux, now in the form of an adherence, via Protestantism to Freemasonry and nationalistic mysticism¹⁰, i.e., a form of neo-Gnostic heresy. Yet, Chrysostom was uncanonically canonised in the 1990s¹¹ - was it for his neo-Gnostic positions (Freemasonry, Protestant, etc.)? The more so since it was reported that the American “Episcopal Church” had first canonised him as Saint and martyr in June 1923 in a Synod of 110 Bishop¹². Interestingly, in his *The Sainthood of Common Criminals as Part of the Balkan Problem and Elsewhere: A Letter to President George Bush*, Father Romanides reserves the following characterisation for the types of Western ‘saints’ like Lanfranc of Canterbury (1070-1089 AD) and Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153 AD, the founder of Western Catholic Mysticism): “by civilised standards, common criminals”¹³. Neither Chrysostom could be truly considered an Ethomartyr of a nation loyal to the Lord Jesus Christ but only a representative of a Frankish anti-Orthodox neo-Gnostic spiritual-political entity for it is impossible for a Christian who harms the only Self-Truth-First-Cause, i.e., the Lord Jesus Christ, to be beneficial in that manner to a secondary-cause/creature (the nations/nationalism) that is the work of the Former.

Concerning the Izmit massacres, the member of the fact-finding mission of the Red Cross, Maurice Gehri stated:

Archbishop of Nicaea, Mgr Vassilios, ... told me the story of the Iznik massacre by the Turks (June 1920) and said: “The Greek Army has been far too gentle in its repression. I am not a military man, but a man of the church,

¹⁰ See Paschalis Kitromilides’ exegesis of the adverse effects of mystical nationalism upon Orthodoxy and Orthodox clergy as a psychological phenomenon (in Hieromonk Euthymius Trikaminas 2017, 330-332).

¹¹ See Hieromonk Euthymius Trikaminas 2017.

¹² See Solomonidis, Christos. *Χρυσόστομος Σμύρνης* [Chrysostom of Smyrna]. Vol. II. Athens, Greece: Ἑθνικὴ Μνημοσύνη, 1971, p. 254. According to the *Freemason Grand Lodge of Greece*, literato and journalist, Christos Solomonidis, who wrote a number of eulogies about Chrysostom of Smyrna, was one of its distinguished members. [<https://www.mste.gr/diakekrimenoi-ellines-tektones-w-68014.html>, accessed Oct 28, 2023]

¹³ Father John Romanides 1992, emphasis in original.

and I would have liked all the Turks to be exterminated, without leaving a single one alive”¹⁴.

In 1925, Archbishop Vasileios became the Ecumenical Patriarch at Phanar. The atrocities against Turkish peasants with Western complicity witnessed in Izmit by Arnold Toynbee is said to be the turning point upon his initial pro-Greek stance – a typical Frankish turn about that, as we have seen, ultimately involved a despicable exoneration of Britain and himself from their primary responsibility for the Greek catastrophe.

As far as Turkish side was concerned the path to the future Turkish state was not straightforward. While the forces which participated in the War of Independence included persons and organizations of various politico-religious orientations, including modernist Islamists, the nature of the Turkish state in the making was to be contested. One path would lead to an essentially Roman, independent, national, *sinallilistically laik* and unitary Turkish Republic, following the tradition of the Roman modernists and their *vahdet-i vücud* theophilosophy, primarily in the form (not necessarily in organizational terms) of the Turkish *Bektaşîyye*, the *Mevlevîyye* (especially its *Şems* branch), and the *Melamîyye* –notably, the key Islamic religious expressions of the early Ottoman Emirate and the time of Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed. The other path would take the Roman Muslim people of Anatolia to an unconditionally pro-Western (liberal-capitalistic) and pro-Caliphal Islamist Republic-like entity based on a modernized version of the foreign dualistic *din-devlet* model relating to the imported non-Turkish *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye*, its *Hâlîdiyye* sub-branch, and its various offshoots¹⁵. We shall see in this chapter how the leadership and people of Anatolia took the Roman path towards a *laik* Turkish Republic.

The Anglophone discourse on Turkish *Laiklik*

A review of the Anglophone literature on the aspects of the Kemalist *laik* policies reveals three major inter-related theses. The first thesis is what

¹⁴ Gehri, Maurice « Mission d'enquête en Anatolie (12-22 mai 1921) », Revue internationale de la Croix rouge, tome LII, no 227, 15 juillet 1921. *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 3, Issue 31 (July 1921):721-735, p. 726, Accessed Jul 30, 2023. https://internationalreview.icrc.org/sites/default/files/S102688120_0027094a.pdf.

¹⁵ As things would expectedly develop, while a possible third merely exoteric *seriat*-based path did constitute a vivid and potential threat especially in specific areas of Turkey, it did not really represent a serious comprehensive alternative for Turkish society as a whole at that time.

is usually referred to as disestablishment. “Disestablishment connotes an attempt to deprive religion of state connection and support by removing its institutions from a position of union, patronage, or control in a political structure”¹⁶. Or further to the point, “disestablishment, ..., would entail ending the established status of Islam and ending control – at least of religion, if not of lay control over religion – in the state”¹⁷. According to B. Lewis - the major exponent of the disestablishment discourse - “[t]he basis of Kemalist religious policy was laicism, not irreligion; its purpose was not to destroy Islam but to disestablish it – to end the power of religion and its exponents in political, social, and cultural affairs, and limit it to matters of belief and worship”¹⁸. Landau, citing the many accomplishments of Atatürk, credits him also with “the disestablishment of religion by removing religious officials from their institutionalized positions and secularizing education and the courts”¹⁹. Weiker considers that “[w]hether [it] was necessary for Atatürk to be so drastic as he was in disestablishing Islam is still debatable...”²⁰. To summarize, disestablishment refers to privatisation and the removal of religion from the public sphere²¹.

The second thesis on Turkish secularism emphasizes separation between state and religion, usually, in structural terms. Initially, it was early observers of the reforms that espoused its explanatory self-sufficiency. According to Rustow, “[t]he casual Western observer with some knowledge of recent Turkish history is likely to think of Kemal Atatürk as an energetic leader who, in a successful revolution, deposed the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph. He credits Atatürk with making Turkey over from a traditional Muslim society into a modern Western nation and, in the process, separating the religious establishment from the state”²². Beyond the casual Western observer, Daniel Lerner, the father of Western modernization theory, who perceived secularism as institutional separation, argued that the “Muslim institution in Turkey has been separated from the state”²³. Dodd states that “... Atatürk completed the separation of church and state”²⁴. Lenczowski cites Kemalist “secularism, [to mean] definite separation of church and

¹⁶ Davison 1998, 137-138.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Lewis 1961, 406.

¹⁹ Landau 1984, xii.

²⁰ Weiker 1981, 110.

²¹ Davison 1998, 157.

²² Rustow 1957, 69.

²³ Lerner 1964, III.

²⁴ Dodd 1979, 82.

state”²⁵. Zürcher claims that Kemalist “secularism meant not so much the separation of church and state as the subjugation and integration of religion into the bureaucracy”²⁶. Toprak states that “[r]eligious institutions were not separated from the state but rather became subservient to it”²⁷. Elsewhere she argues “[t]here was no separation of religion and state; such a lack of boundaries between state apparatus and institutional Islam is, of course, very much in line with Islamic theology as well as Ottoman practice. Paradoxically, the impossibility in Islam of separating religion and state resulted in the subservience of the former to the latter”²⁸. To the advocates of the disestablishment thesis (essentially derived, like the separation thesis also, via Enlightenment-type rationalism) the control school “suggests supervision through institutionalized power relations, not privatization”²⁹. “To those who saw secularisation as institutional separation, proponents of the control account suggest control, not separation”³⁰. It is clear here that the standpoint out of which the power-centric control thesis emanates contains also a specific understanding of Islam itself, which is certainly non-Roman but within the typical Western conflictual Orientalist (Enlightenment-type rationalism)/anti-Orientalist (Nietzschean power-based genealogy) understanding of Islam.

The control thesis is essentially related to Şerif Mardin’s writings. Mardin questioned the appropriateness of focusing on the ‘macro’ level of social dynamics and “the overwhelming stamp of *devlet* [‘state’] as a mode of thinking”³¹ in the works of a number of prominent Turkish scholars. As he sees it, Mardin attempted to focus on the ‘micro’ social level – in reality, he focused on a very specific part of this ‘micro’ level. Mardin contends that due to the positivistic nature of Kemalism and Kemal’s own distaste for the forms of social control embedded in ‘Turkish folk culture’ – the former providing only a cognitive directive, creating as such an ‘ethical’ vacuum, while the latter required that the “final legitimation” be obtained “in terms of religious values” - Kemalist *laiklik* could hardly not be considered as anti-religious by all participants. For him, *laiklik* was an attack on local culture by a positivist elite that imposed control by executing, in Davison’s words, “an ethically limited and contextually inappropriate political and cultural

²⁵ Lenczowski 1952, 120.

²⁶ Zürcher 1994, 244.

²⁷ Toprak 1981, 2.

²⁸ Toprak 1987, 220.

²⁹ Davison 1998, 157.

³⁰ Davison 1998, 157.

³¹ Mardin 1997a., 72.

program”³². Mardin correctly points out that there was a commonality between Ottoman state religiosity and what he sees as folk Islam, which connected the state and the people together. Yet precisely because he does not examine the historical-doctrinal trajectory of Roman Ottoman religiosity, not only does he fail to discern the nature of this common religiosity, but he even goes as far as to look for it in inappropriate places. He seems to identify it in the various forms of late Ottoman Islamism and of non-*vahdet-i vücūd* Islamist Sufi movements such as that of the *Nakşibendi şeyh* and latterly founder of the Islamist and Protestant-like *Nurcu* movement, Bediüzzaman Said Nursi (1877 – 1960 AD) – a dear one of the West, and lately of the currently almost anti-Kemalist CHP which has been very prone in serving Western imperialist causes and anti-human agendas, something that makes the governing Islamists look Atatürkists!, ‘assisting’ them as such in their long-term goals as they are ‘slip-streaming’ and ‘side-surfing’ key Atatürkist principles to their detriment. (To be fair, they indeed have partially assimilated certain Kemalist policies such as anti-Imperialism, in various degrees and manners). And, coming back to Said Nursi, this despite the fact that the *Nurcu* movement developed very late in Ottoman history and only became somewhat politico-socially significant after Atatürk’s death – particularly during the unconditionally Westernophile pro-Islamist government of Adnan Menderes³³. It is interesting to note that the control thesis constitutes a point of interpretive unity for, and is supported by, both Western or unconditional Westernophile liberal and Islamist-oriented commentators³⁴. Moreover, independently of which of the three theses they adhere to, most works on Turkish *laiklik* depict the concept as well as Kemalism in general as anti-clerical.

Despite their seeming differentiation, all the above theses stem from and remain within the confines of neo-Frankish modern epistemology. The first two essentially relate to Enlightenment’s Encyclopaedia, the third to aspects of Nietzschean genealogy. The only attempt to break the Frankish epistemological linearity is the pioneering and ground-breaking work of Andrew Davison, *Secularism and Revivalism in Turkey: A Hermeneutic Reconsideration* (1998). Davison’s hermeneutic approach to the thought of

³² Davison 1998, 156.

³³ The relevant academic works of Şerif Mardin are pioneering in introducing the understanding of Islam found in the late *Nakşibendiyye* and in Bediüzzaman Said Nursi to the Anglophone public.

³⁴ The work of Hasan Ceylan 1993 represents a characteristic example of the Islamist-oriented interpretation of *laiklik* and its understanding as ‘control of religion’ or even irreligion.

Gökalp and Kemalist *laiklik* can be seen as an application of a modernized version of the ancient philosophic form of Roman epistemology to the subject. It is for this reason that he succeeds for the first time in illuminating the complexity, peculiarities and intricacies of the different dimensions of Turkish secularization. For him, *laiklik* was constituted by “control, but not only control; disestablishment, and then reestablishment; [it was] anti-clerical, but only to a certain point; privatization [was] encouraged, but not institutionally or ideologically sustained; ...”³⁵. Having previously discussed the nature of hermeneutical inquiry, including its open-ended and dynamic aspects, Davison rightly states that “[o]nly a hermeneutic engagement is suited to clarify these dimensions. And, indeed, further work on laicism in Turkey directed toward explaining aspects of these constitutive dimensions in greater conceptual detail remains necessary”³⁶. Apart from the problems stemming from the unfulfilled *Logos*-centricity inherent in (Aristotelian) hermeneutics, the lack of engagement with the religious also constitutes a partial reason for Davison’s inability to identify the critical position of Gökalp in Atatürk’s thought and modernization project. In this respect, Davison does not depart from the ‘mainstream’ Anglophone literature, which includes no explanatory attempt and remains within the inadequate descriptions notably produced by Bernard Lewis. Apart from *laiklik* representing a total rupture with the past – and so leaving us in a vacuum vis-à-vis understanding the general supportive attitude towards its application by Turkish society at large –, the only type of explanation offered in a Lewis-type approach is basically centred on some exoteric Kemalist utterances relating to *laiklik*’s social enactment yet without ever attempting to enquire about their meaning within the overall theophilosophical framework that this enactment took place.

The Origins of Atatürk’s Roman Religious Personality

As we have also seen in the preceding chapter, *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* remained the dominant form of religiosity throughout the Turkish- Muslim lands even after the impact of the orthopractic *Nakşibendiyye* from the mid-18th century. This is true of Macedonia and southern Albania/Northern Epirus as well as other areas, and we have a wealth of evidence relating to the presence of Bektashi, Mevlevi and Ahi-Kadiri *tekkes* in the regions

³⁵ Davison 1998, 191.

³⁶ Davison 1998, 191.

where Atatürk's paternal and maternal ancestors are said to have lived³⁷. Hasluck observes that the distinctions between the 'orthodox Sunni' orders and the Bektashi in Albania "were not rigid"³⁸. The families of both of Atatürk's parents comprised of persons with high religious sensitivities, and "it was impossible for Mustafa Kemal not to be affected by this religious substratum"³⁹. This substratum was closely related to a constant and conscious connection to a *Yürük* identity intertwined with Roman *tasavvuf*. As Ruşen Eşref Ünyadın states, "Many times Atatürk repeated to me: 'My ancestors were *Yürük* Turks who had come to Rumeli [from Anatolia]'"⁴⁰. As far as Macedonia is concerned, the terms *Yürük*, *Türkmen*, and *Konyari* ('those from Konya') were used more or less interchangeably.

Atatürk's paternal family emigrated to Salonika in the 1830s from Kocacık, a village in the Debre sub-province of Manastır province⁴¹. In 1900, Kynchov mentions that Kocacık's population of 1250 persons was all Turkish⁴², especially mentioning the islet of Turkmen Konyari settlements just south of Debre in the large area of Jupa. As for the religious composition of the area of Debre, Noyan (*Dedebaba*) states: "In our old province of Manastır, there existed 34 Bektashi *tekkes*; in the small town of Debre, the population of which was mostly Sunni, there were also 5 [Bektashi] *tekkes*. Bektashism was very widespread in that area... Among them, the *tekke* of Ali Baba was the most well-known"⁴³. The establishment of a *tekke* of the *Kadiriyye* in Debre around 1870-1880 AD⁴⁴ as representative of '*ahi-kadirism*'⁴⁵ gives us a clear indication of the nature of 'Sunnism' within the pre-dominance of Bektashi/Alevi influences both in Debre and the wider area. According to Hasluck, 90% of the population of South Albania was Bektashi⁴⁶. In general, the 19th-century Albanian *Kadiriyye* represented "*ahi-kadirism*"⁴⁷. This was a 'marriage' between, on the one hand, mainstream Sunni Kadirism, and, on the other, Ahism, which relates to Bektashism/Alevism/Melamism and the 13th-century *Fütüvet* organisations.

³⁷ Noyan (*Dedebaba*) 2002, 78, Hasluck 1914-5/1970, 36, Bahadır 2005, 241, İzeti 2003, 207 and 209, and Hasluck 1929, 438.

³⁸ Hasluck 1929, 589. In this direction, Hasluck sites two examples of *şeyhs* that converted to Bektashism.

³⁹ Meydan 2002, 41.

⁴⁰ Şapolyo 1958, 21.

⁴¹ Μοναστήριον/Manastır/Bitola province (Güler 2000, 25).

⁴² Kynchov 1970/1900, 561.

⁴³ Noyan (*Dedebaba*) (2002), p. 78.

⁴⁴ İzeti 2003, 207.

⁴⁵ İzeti 2004, 209.

⁴⁶ Hasluck 1929, 438.

⁴⁷ İzeti 2004, 209.

Finally, of central importance to the nature of ‘Sunnism’ in Albania as well as the modernisation trajectories relating to political movements associated with *Babağan* Bektashism (i.e., modern nationalisms), is the fact that we find no *Nakşibendi tekkes* at all within the borders of modern Albania, including the area around Debre, in the 18th and 19th centuries⁴⁸. In this light, Hasluck’s observation that the distinctions between the ‘orthodox Sunni’ orders and the Bektashi one in Albania “were not rigid”⁴⁹, becomes even more comprehensible.

Atatürk’s father was the Salonica-born, Ali Rıza Efendi (1841-May 23, 1886 AD). Atatürk’s paternal grandfather was known as Kırmızı Hafız Ahmet Efendi (1825?-?). While Ahmet Efendi’s full name included the title *hafız* (memorizer of Koran), the true *hafız* of the family was his brother, Kızıl Hafız Mehmet Emin Efendi⁵⁰. According to Güler, the nickname ‘Kızıl’ (Red) shows that the paternal family of Atatürk were of the ‘*Kızıl-Oğuz*’, the ‘*Türkmen/Yürük*’ of Kocacı⁵¹. “The epithet ‘red’ [*kırmızı, kızıl*] in the name of the [paternal] grandfather of Mustafa Kemal, in general, is an epithet peculiar to the Alevi- Bektashi tradition”⁵². By taking Müberra Kerime Molla Hanım as his second wife, the son of Emin Efendi, Salih Efendi, was married into the Mevlevi-Şeyhzade family of Salonica⁵³. Müberra Hanım was the daughter of the head of one of the most important and rich Mevlevi *dergâhs* in the Ottoman lands, the *Selanik Mevlevihânesi*, Şeyh Eşref Ali Dede (b. 1840/1841, post. 1869-July 1898 and November 1898-1912 (cont.))⁵⁴. Moreover, the older sister of Atatürk’s father, Hatice Hanım, who played a critical role in arranging the marriage of Atatürk’s parents, was the daughter-in-law of the Şeyh of Salonica’s *Mevlevihâne*,⁵⁵. Born in 1877,

⁴⁸ İzeti 2004, 157. In the general area of Epirus, there was a *Nakşibendi tekke* in Ioannina/Yanya at that time, but it is not clear whether it belonged to the *Halidiyye*.

⁴⁹ Hasluck 1929, p. 589. In this direction, Hasluck sites two examples of *şeyhs* who converted to Bektashism.

⁵⁰ Güler 1999, 985. Kızıl Hafız Mehmet Emin Efendi was a teacher in the primary school in the Çınarlı neighbourhood of the village (Güler 1999, 985).

⁵¹ Güler 1999, 983.

⁵² Meydan 2002, 36.

⁵³ Meydan 2002, 36. Atatürk’s relations with Müberra’s family seem to have remained constant. One of her sons, Necati, was married at the Dolmabahçe Palace on Sep 28, 1927. Atatürk was also present at the wedding ceremony of Nesrin Hanım, a grandchild of Müberra Hanım by her daughter Vüsat on Oct 2, 1937.

⁵⁴ Parlak 2019, 64.

⁵⁵ Güler 2000, 51, and Şapolyo 1958, 20.

Kemal Atatürk was the son of Ali Rıza Efendi who was the son of Hafız Ahmet Efendi who was the son of Mehmed Nûri Efendi who was the son of the *Halveti Şeyh* and Imam of the Mosque of Kocakaşım Paşa neighbourhood, Hacı Ali Rıza Efendi who was the son of one among the *Şeyhs*, *Şeyh* Ahmet Efendi [(Hacı Sofuzade)] who was the son of the head of Salonica's *Mevlevihâne*, Şeyh Hasan Efendi⁵⁶.

Apart of Şeyh Hacı Ali Rıza Efendi (1797/1800-???? AD), among the other sons of the head of the *Selanik Mevlevihânesi*, Şeyh Ahmet (Sadık) Efendi (Hacı Sofuzade, post. 1762-1794 AD⁵⁷), we find the heads of the same *Mevlevihânesi*, Şeyh Mehmed Ali Efendi (post. 1794-1830/31 AD⁵⁸), Şeyh İbrahim Ethem Efendi (post. 1830/1831-1853 AD⁵⁹), and Şeyh Yakup Çelebi Efendi (post. 1855-1860 AD⁶⁰). The father of Şeyh Ahmet Efendi (Hacı Sofuzâde), Şeyh Hasan (son of Şeyh Ahmed (Derviş Ahmed), (d. 1762? or 1690 AD, post. in-between 1590 and 1690 AD?)) had also occupied that post before 1762.

Indeed, it was upon the person of the head of Salonica's *Mevlevihâne*, Şeyh Hasan Efendi (Hacı Sofu/Molla Hasan) (d. 1762? or 1690 AD) that the paternal and the maternal lineages of Atatürk converge upon; this Mevlevi dervish was the grandfather of the grandfather of the grandfather of Atatürk. We understand from the relevant 1839 Ottoman archives that it was his father who had been known by or adopted the epithet, *Sofuzâde*. While the one family line leads from Şeyh Ahmet Efendi (Hacı Sofuzâde) to Atatürk's father, Ali Rıza Efendi, the other one goes from Şeyh Hasan Efendi's other son, Ali Ağa (1799-???? AD) to Atatürk's mother, Zübeyde Hanım (1859-1923 AD); the Sofizâde/Sofuzâde family is also connected to Sarıgöl (Kaylar/Baraklı village⁶¹), an area west of the district of Vodina (Edessa) in Macedonia and migrated to Langaza (near Salonika) probably around 1800-1820⁶² - or before.

One of the biggest groups of *Konyari* in Rumeli was that of Sarıgöl, which was established around 1390 AD, and included 130 villages⁶³. The density and distribution of Bektashi *tekkes* in an area with a radius of 20 km (3-4 *tekkes*) shows that the *Bektaşîyye* exerted a very strong religious influence on Sarıgöl's population, especially before 1826, circumscribing

⁵⁶ Öz 2017, 385.

⁵⁷ Parlak 2019, 64.

⁵⁸ Parlak 2019, 64.

⁵⁹ Parlak 2019, 64.

⁶⁰ Parlak 2019, 64.

⁶¹ Öz 2017, 130.

⁶² Şapolyo 1958, 22 and Deliorman 1961 (quoted also in Lütem 2002, 5).

⁶³ Ivanof 1920 in Güler 1999, 984.

in this manner the nature of the local Sunni presence⁶⁴. It is also interesting to note that all the three *tekkes* that Hasluck mentions had been established at the previous location of Orthodox Christian churches and monasteries and were still frequented by Orthodox Christians⁶⁵. This once more points to the Roman Orthodox Christian-Islamic inter-encapsulation. Indeed, within the context of the 18th-19th century, Atatürk's maternal family name, Sofizâde/Sofuzâde, does not signify a religious Sunni conservatism and ignorant fanaticism (*yobazlık*). As Baha Sait's research shows, even as late as the 1910s the Alevi communities used the word *Sofi/Sofiyan* to refer to their fellow members and it was equivalent – yet without any negative connotations – to the term *kızılbaş* which the Sunnis used for them⁶⁶. In his work on Anatolian populations in 1922, Skalieris clearly states that the Alevis (*kızılbaş*) “referred to themselves as *Sofu(des)*”, i.e., *Sofi* [(Gr. The Wise Ones)]⁶⁷. Hasluck also mentions a “heterodox Turcoman tribe” with the name of “*Sufulir* [Sofular]” in the Sivas district⁶⁹. There is also a certain connection between Atatürk's maternal family name and the Bektashi *tekke* (*Memi Bey Sultan Tekkesi*) in the wider locality of *Bucak* in *Sarıgöl*⁷⁰. It was situated between the village of *Sofular* (today's Καπνοχώριον) and *Köşeler*. As with the whole of this area, around 1900 AD, both these two villages possessed Turkish (Yörük) populations – except for some Gypsies⁷¹. The *tekke* of *Bucak*, which dated back at least to 1641-1642 AD, was the most prominent in the area but received a serious blow in 1826 AD with the destruction of the *Yeniçeris*. In the early 20th century, it was inhabited by married dervishes.

⁶⁴ Noyan 2002, 315 and Hasluck 1929, 529-30. The only reference to a direct relation between Zübeyde Hanım and the *Bektaşîyye* comes from the late Şevki Koca (Derviş Fecrî) [from his letter to me dated November 8th, 2001 AD (21 *Recep-Hicri* 1422) as well as our conversations]. According to the archive of his father, (Halifebaba) Turgut Koca, she became formally a member of the *Bektaşîyye* by way of the head of the *Reni* (*Durbâli Sultân*) *Dergâhı* (Thessaly), Beratlı Çazım Baba (1919-1942 AD).

⁶⁵ Hasluck 1929, 530.

⁶⁶ Birdoğan 1995 b., 26. Birdoğan quotes from Baha Sait Bey's article, *Sofiyan Süreği – Kızılbaş Meydanı* [The 'Stadium' of Alevis-Bektashis] published in *Türk Yurdu* (No. 22, Oct 1926).

⁶⁷ The suffix *-des* is an addition which gives the word a Greek character.

⁶⁸ Skalieris 1922, 394.

⁶⁹ Hasluck 1929, 478-479.

⁷⁰ Hasluck 1929, 528-529.

⁷¹ Kynchov puts the populations of Sofilar and Köşeler at 354 and 750 respectively, all of them Turks. (Kynchov 1970/1900, 569-570).

In addition to a Bektāṣi connection, Öz rightly argues that the epithet Sofizāde/Sofuzāde pertains to one being a member of that family with its special connection to the *Mevleviyye* (*Sūfī*)⁷². According to Atatürk's sister, Makbule Hanım (Boysan/Atadan), her mother explained time and time again the following: "Our real family roots are *Yürük*. We came here Rumeli] from the environs of Konya-Karaman[/Cappadocia]. My father's great-uncle went to Konya, entered the Mevlevi order and stayed there, so that his *Yürük*ness would become a reality..."⁷³.

As far as the epithet *molla* (religious scholar) that Atatürk's mother used for herself, it cannot be taken to mean an exclusive Sunni orthopractic and conservative religious person for the simple reason that the title was not used as an identifier of religiosity but, as it was common those days, merely to point out that she was a person who could read and write⁷⁴. Indeed, several important Bektashis also carried this title⁷⁵, and the same applies to the title *Hacı*⁷⁶. To give but an indicative example, the Bektashi *Seyhülislâm*, Pîrizāde Osman Sâhib Efendi (d. 1770 AD), who was a much-respected scholar, calligrapher and a virtuous person, was known as *Osman Molla*.

The Roman Orthodox Christian-Islamic inter-encapsulation is clearly shown in Zübeyde Hanım's attitude towards Roman Orthodox Christianity - despite the efforts of various writers to uncritically present her as a religious conservative. The fact that during her family's stay at the farm of her brother at Rapla after her first husband's death, she responded to Atatürk's interest in learning by having no qualms about sending her son to a local Christian school⁷⁷ provides us with insights into the nature of her supposed religious 'conservatism'. Here we can see clearly a permanent feature of Roman Islam (particularly Bektashism, Melamism, Mevlevism) since early Ottoman times, i.e., its organic inter-encapsulation with its Roman Christian counterpart⁷⁸.

As far as the Balkans are concerned, the most widespread *tarikāt* after the *Bektāṣiyye* was the *Mevleviyye*. The *Mevleviyye* was a *tarikāt* that was intertwined with the *Bektāṣiyye* and the *Melamiyye*. Counting themselves as practitioners of *melamet*, the Mevlevis used to call the other *tarikats*, *sofu*

⁷² Öz 2017, 136-137.

⁷³ Güler 1999, 995.

⁷⁴ Şapolyo 1958, 23.

⁷⁵ See, for example, Yüksel 2002, 73 and 90.

⁷⁶ See, for example, Yüksel 2002, 62, 66, and 67.

⁷⁷ Şapolyo 1958, 34.

⁷⁸ A Turkish researcher of Albanian Bektashism related to me that even today many Albanian Bektashis view their Orthodox Christian compatriots as religiously closer to themselves than their Sunni co-religionists.

(*sûfi*) *tarikats*. It is also necessary to note the *Kalenderi* effects present in the *Mevleviyye* which first emerged at the time of Mevlana's descendant, Ulu Ârif Çelebi [(1272-1320 AD)]⁷⁹.

It is also interesting that Mirmiroglu maintains that Bektashism constitutes “nothing but a kind of Islamic graft on to the former Christian populations, who became Muslim in modern times (especially in southern Albania and around the town of Kastoria (Macedonia)). Those populations are the ‘*Konyari*’ of Thessaly, the ‘*Yörük(oi)*’ of Rodop(i), and the ‘*Tatar(oi)*’ of Dobruca/Dobriçe”⁸⁰. As her relative Ahmet Bulca seems to indicate, Zübeyde Hanım's religiosity is attributable to the cumulative religious heritage from her family, and, as the Mevlevi connection above shows, this was clearly *tasavvuf*-related. As far as Atatürk's family's religious outlook is concerned, we can clearly observe a synergy between *Yürükness*, relating in general to the Turcophone Alevi-Bektashi tradition, and Mevlevism – and the light at the end of the tunnel, the *Melamiyye*. In other words, the overall religious setting was particularly fertile for the *Şems* (Bektashi/Alevi) branch of the *Mevleviyye*.

Both Mustafa Kemal's paternal and maternal families were member of the Mevlevi and [very secondary] the Halveti *tarikats*. It is probable that among Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's family and circles there were members of the Bektaşî-Alevi *tarikats* too. Because it is known that after the closing down of the *Bektaşî* and *Alevi* convents in the Balkans, their members took refuge in the convents of other *tarikats*⁸¹.

In his excellent work on the famous house of Atatürk's house in Salonica, Vasilis Dimitriadis furnishes us with an important document (Sicil No. 314, p. 10/April 13, 1887) which is the Will of Atatürk's father, Ali Rıza Efendi. Among the various items, we find one of them titled, “*Miftah al-kulüb* 1 [piece of] 10 guruş [value]”⁸². In his presentation of Dimitriadis' list (in daily *Sabah*, Feb 19, 2017)⁸³, Erhan Afyoncu writes: “10 kuruş değerinde Muhammed Nuri Şemseddin Nakşibendi'nin Miftahü'l-Kulub (Kalplerin Anahtarı) adlı kitabı”, referring to the book of Muhammed Nuri Şemseddin Nakşibendi, *Miftahü'l-Kulub* (The Key of the Hearts), and thus,

⁷⁹ Öz 2017, 337.

⁸⁰ Mirmiroglu 1940, 124. Noyan (Dedebaba) also talks about the Bektashism of these communities (Noyan (Dedebaba) 2002, 21).

⁸¹ Öz 2017, 137.

⁸² Dimitriadis 2016, 380-381.

⁸³ <https://www.sabah.com.tr/yazarlar/erhan-afyoncu/2017/02/19/ataturkun-aile-kayitlari-ilk-kez-yayinlandi>, Accessed Aug 1st, 2023.

‘self-appropriating’ the relevant item to the *Nakşibendiyye* and ultimate to Atatürk’s legacy. One Minute, One Minute, One Minute!!! The document itself does not refer to any author or gives any more details. In my view, if one delves deeply and simply into the matter in the light of our discussion, one will easily understand that the book Ali Rıza Efendi left to his family was not the one relating to the *Nakşibendiyye* but one that belongs to the *Mevleviyye* since it is more likely to be Mevlevi sage and poet, Gelibolulu Hüseyin Azmî Dede (1815-1892 AD)’s *Miftâhü’l-kulûb* which the Melami Şeyh and Atatürk’s companion, Bursalı Mehmed Tahir Efendi describes as: “concerning the ways of Mevlevism”⁸⁴.

Exoterically Mevlevi, Esoterically Bektashi

In 19th-century Salonica modernity and *tasavvuf* were fully inter-encapsulating in the Roman way. As Dimitriadis points out, a significant number of *tekkes* existed in that city, with every Turkish neighbourhood possessing at least one of them. The official figures show that the number of *tasavvuf*-related functionaries exceeded that of the *ulema* scholars. For example, “in 1840 there existed 25 mosques with 48 *imams*, 8 schools with 8 schoolmasters and 30 scholars, 60 *ulema*, 8 *derviş tekkes*, 1 *şeyh* and 100 *dervişes* in Salonica”⁸⁵. *Tekkes* were present in Christian as well as mixed neighbourhoods. According to Alkan, the number of *tekkes* in the years between 1875 and 1905 ranged from 20 to 23⁸⁶. Based on official tax records and *defters*, Dimitriadis also specifies the number of *tekkes* in 1906 to be 23. Of these, 18 were in Muslim neighbourhoods, 4 in Christian ones, and 1 in the mixed neighbourhood of *Çayır*⁸⁷. The total number of *tekkes* specified in the two works by Dimitriadis and Alkan combined is 33-34. In addition to his fully-tasavvufi family environment, it was in this religious climate that Atatürk grew up and matured both politically and religiously.

Falih Rıfkı Atay quotes from the letter sent to him by Kılıçoğlu Hakkı about Atatürk’s early religiosity:

Our families were very close. It was the father of my father-in-law (*büyük kaynatam*), Şeyh Rıfat Efendi, who gave Zübeyde Molla to her second husband. When Mustafa Kemal returned to his home in Salonica during his vacations [from Manastır], he used to go to the *tekke* of [the father of] my father-in-law, [and] during the *âyin* days (the days when religious ceremonies

⁸⁴ Bursalı Mehmed Tahir 1972, 35.

⁸⁵ Özdemir 1994.

⁸⁶ Alkan 2003, 50-1, and additional information provided to me by Dr. Alkan.

⁸⁷ Dimitriadis 1983, 241-7.

were held), taking his place in the dervish circle and repeating *Hû Hû* [He, He. i.e., the ‘Beloved’, God], he would go on whirling until he was dripping with sweat⁸⁸.

It is interesting to note that the second husband of Atatürk’s mother, Ragıp Bey, who see married via their mutual connection to Şeyh Rıfat Efendi, was a refugee from Yenişehir/Larissa⁸⁹, a town in which Bektashism was predominant among the people. In this respect, it was the place of origin of Hasan Nâfız Dede (d. 1853 AD). Hasan Nâfız Dede was the son of the mufti of that town, the religious scholar, and *medrese* director, Hacı Halil Efendi. At a certain time, because he was known as a religiously enlightened and righteous youth, the town’s people entrusted him with the duty of bringing holy water from the Pir Evi at Hacıbektaş (Cappadocia) to be used in the blessings against the locust raids that were afflicting the area at the time⁹⁰. Hasan Nâfız Dede also served as the functionary of the important *Mevlevihâne*⁹¹ of that town. That *Mevlevihâne* was established by the grandfather of the grandfather of Atatürk’s father, i.e., by the then head of *Selanik Mevlevihânesi*, Şeyh Ahmed (Derviş Ahmed), (d. 1762? or 1690 AD, post. in-between 1590 and 1690 AD?)⁹². Concerning Ragıp Bey, Atatürk’s initial reaction against the second marriage of his mother lasted up to his entering the *Manastır Askeri İdadesi*. From then on, during his vacations, he began to come home. It was during that time that he took part in the religious ceremonies of ‘Şeyh Rıfat Efendi’s *tekke*’. Atatürk described his later relations with his stepfather: “But after [that], I became friends with this true gentleman. He became a good educator to me. I applauded the fact that my mother at that young age established a connection with such a family. ...”⁹³.

Researchers are rather ‘split’ on the issue of Atatürk’s *tasavvuf* affiliation during his early years. Borak states that in his youth Atatürk busied himself with the study of Rumi and his works, particularly the *Mesnevi* and the *Divan-ı Kebir*⁹⁴. Önder states that Mustafa Kemal “used to visit the *Mevlevihâne* in Salonica with his mother during his childhood”⁹⁵.

⁸⁸ Atay 1998, 31.

⁸⁹ Güler 1999, 1006.

⁹⁰ Sezai Küçük 2003, 146-147.

⁹¹ Sezai Küçük 2003, 146-147.

⁹² Öz 2017, 342.

⁹³ Güler 1999, 1006.

⁹⁴ Borak 2002, 96.

⁹⁵ Küçük 2002, 262, quoting Önder, Mehmet, *Mevlana Müzesinden Notlar* [Notes from the Mevlana Museum], *Türk Yurdu*, Temmuz 1964 (Mevlana Özel Sayısı), 68.

On the other hand, Kinross writes that during his youth Atatürk participated in Bektashi *âyins*⁹⁶. Bozkurt also says that, as far as can be known, Atatürk participated in Bektashi groups during his youth in Salonica⁹⁷. Can Dündar take ‘the *tekke* of *Şeyh* Rıfat Efendi’ to be a Bektashi one⁹⁸.

If judged from its heads-list of the period, it can be concluded that ‘the *tekke* of *Şeyh* Rıfat Efendi’ was not the *Selanik Mevlevihânesi* since the head of the Mevlevis of Salonica during Atatürk’s time in Manastır (1895-Nov. 1898 AD) was *Şeyh* Eşref Ali Dede. As such, it might have indeed been a purely Bektashi *tekke*. At the same time, if “the *tekke* of *Şeyh* Rıfat Efendi” castigates not leadership but simple membership, then we are talking about the *Selanik Mevlevihânesi* - the only Mevlevi *tekke* in Salonica at that time⁹⁹.

In reality, the Mevlevi-Bektashi ‘split’ is actually bridged in the *Şems* branch of the *Mevleviyye* that the *Selanik Mevlevihânesi* represented at the time. The most conclusive evidence for this can be found in the details of the description of the *ayin-zikr* in which Atatürk used to participate. The two characteristics of the ceremony were the whirling-type *zikr*, and the reference to the word ‘*Hû*’ throughout its duration. Discussing some innovations introduced into the Mevlevi *ayins* by the head of the Beşiktaş/Maçka-Bahariye *Mevlevihâne* and distinguished *Şems* (Bektashi/Alevi) branch *Şeyh*, Hasan Nâfiz Dede (1794-1861 AD), Gölpınarlı points out that, although most of them were not put into practice, there was an *ayin in Turkish* that included “a quatrain containing the recurrent poetry lines ‘*Allâh için Allâh diyelim Hû diyelim Hû*’ [Let us say Allah for Allah; He, let us say He], which became established and was read during *zikr*, especially in the *Ayin-i Cems* of the Bahariye *Mevlevihâne*, and, moreover, in the *tekkes* of those Sufi *şeyhs* who had an Alevi disposition”¹⁰⁰. This largely fits the type of *zikr* performed by Atatürk.

Even more conclusive is the information on the *tasavvuf* understanding of the head of the *Selanik Mevlevihâne* at the time and Atatürk’s relative, Ali Eşref Dede¹⁰¹. In his discussion of the life of the famous Bektashi Mehmet Zühdi (El-Mavhî) Erenoğlu Baba, who was born in Salonica, Noyan (Dedebaba) mentions that he was the spiritual guide of the *Selanik (Mevlevihâne) Şeyhi* Eşref (Bey)¹⁰². The fact that the *Selanik Mevlevihânesi*

⁹⁶ Kinross 1990, 411n.

⁹⁷ Öz 1996, 27, quoting from Fuat Bozkurt 1990, *Aleviliğin Toplumsal Boyutları* [The Social Dimensions of Alevism], Yön Yayınları, İstanbul, 71.

⁹⁸ Dündar 2002.

⁹⁹ Küçük, Sezai 2003, 308-9.

¹⁰⁰ Gölpınarlı 1953, 459

¹⁰¹ Küçük, Sezai 2003, 309.

¹⁰² Noyan (Dedebaba), 141.

represented the *Şems* Bektashi/Alevi branch of the *Mevlevîyye* fits the general pattern of late Mevlevism. As noted in Chapter 4, not only three out of the four Mevlevi *Âsitânes* in Istanbul, but also the central Mevlevi *Dergâh* at Konya at that time represented this *tasavvufî* trend in the person of its *Şeyh*, Abdülvâhid Çelebi (d. 1907 AD). *Şeyh* Eşref, whom Mustafa Kemal and his friends called “‘Talleyrand’ for his politico-religious abilities”¹⁰³, constitutes a prototype of the Roman Bektashi-Mevlevi person: “He was one of the most pious believers in the sainthood of Saint Demetrius [one of the most militant Roman Christian saints, a martyr who is often paired with Saint George]. ... Very few know that, while Christian liturgies were forbidden in the Saint Demetrius Church of Salonica, which had been converted into a mosque, in the *tekke* of the Mevlevîs the honoured saint for five centuries was Saint Demetrius”¹⁰⁴. The Greek childhood friend of Mustafa Kemal, K. Hadjioannou (1891–198? AD) said: “Mustafa’s mother was a vivacious but very pious woman. When Mustafa got sick during his study at Manastır, she took *ayasma* (‘holy water’) and amulets from the Mosque of Saint Demetrius given to her by the dervishes. ... Mustafa liked neither quackeries, nor *hocas* and dervishes. He was a European, not an Oriental, from his early days. Yet he never forgot that his mother asked the help of Saint Demetrius. His mother was a very strict but open-hearted woman, and she was very pious”¹⁰⁵. Zübeyde Hanım’s piety was a very Roman one.

In addition, with his close relations with the *Şeyh* of the Konya *Mevlevihâne*, Abdühalim Çelebi, Atatürk showed his personal identification with the *Şems* (Bektashi/Alevi) branch of the *Mevlevîyye* on at least two occasions. The following information comes out of the fieldwork of Sezai Küçük¹⁰⁶. During World War I the (*Şems* branch) *Şeyh* of the Konya *Mevlevihâne*, Abdühalim Çelebi, sent a ‘request’ for the collection of donations for the army to the *Mevlevihânes* of the Ottoman Empire. One of those collections was made by the last *Şeyh* of the *Mevlevihâne* of Niğde, Hüsameddin Dede (Temizsoy) (d. 1955), who came to Ankara for a meeting with Abdühalim Çelebi. There Atatürk was introduced to Hüsameddin Dede by the Çelebi. Atatürk was pleased with the politico-religious conversation he had with the Dede and asked to meet again with him in the future. Then the story moves to the 1930s, when we find the son of Hüsameddin Dede, Ziya Temizsoy, serving as a musical composer on Atatürk’s personal train.

¹⁰³ Christodoulou 2007, 59.

¹⁰⁴ Christodoulou 2007, 59-61.

¹⁰⁵ Christodoulou 2007, 58.

¹⁰⁶ I am grateful to Sezai Küçük for this information, which comes out of his interviews with the son of Hüsameddin Dede, Ziya Temizsoy, in 2000.

When he met Atatürk on that train, the latter asked his place of origin. On his replying 'Niğde', Atatürk inquired about the name of his father and family. When Temizsoy said that he was the son of the last *şeyh* of the Niğde *Mevlevihâne*, Hüsameddin Dede, Atatürk replied in surprise: "The son of our own Hüsameddin? (*bizim Hüsameddin mi?*)". There can be little doubt that the religio-political relationship between Atatürk and Hüsameddin Dede extended long into the period after the closure of the *tekkes*. As Sezai Küçük confirmed to me, Hüsameddin Dede was indeed 'exoterically Mevlevi, esoterically Bektashi'. A part of his *Divan* is devoted to the love of *Ehli Beyit* (the Prophet's family), a key Bektashi/Alevi characteristic¹⁰⁷. Apart from Hüsameddin Dede, Veled Çelebi constitutes the second member of the *Şems* branch of the *Mevleviyye* to whom Atatürk referred as '*bizim*', i.e., 'our own'¹⁰⁸.

According to Şevki Koca ((Bektashi) Derviş Fecri), a story circulating among the Bektashis has Atatürk formally initiated (*nasip almak*) into the *Bektaşîyye* by one of the heads (*postnişinler*) of *Katerin Dergâhı*, Tayyar Baba¹⁰⁹. The *Katerin Dergâhı*, otherwise known as (*Sarı*) *Abdullâh Baba Tekkesi*, was located in the town of Katerini, about 65 km south-west of Salonica¹¹⁰. It was an important and active Bektashi *dergâh* during the late Ottoman period. Although it was closed in 1826 after the destruction of the *Yenişeri* and the banning of Bektashism, it was reopened in 1861 by order of Sultan Abdülaziz¹¹¹. As a 1914 document published by Hülya Küçük shows, there were active contacts between the Bektashi central *tekke* (*Pir-Evi*) in Kırşehir and the *Katerin Dergâhı*¹¹². The connection to the *Katerin Dergâhı* as a geographical location makes sense from the point of view of Atatürk's family history, since his father, Ali Rıza Bey, had been a customs officer and timber merchant from the 1870s until well into the 1880s, with direct connections to that town and the surrounding area¹¹³. Although there

¹⁰⁷ Two pictures of Hüsameddin Dede can be found in the Appendix of Sezai Küçük's book (2003). The one which portrays an assembly of Mevlevi *şeyhs* in 1913 is of interest since, according to Sezai Küçük, many of them were in reality Bektashi. A characteristic identification mark for the externally-Mevlevi Bektashis is their distinctively long moustache, somewhat separated from their beard.

¹⁰⁸ Egeli 1959, 71.

¹⁰⁹ Letter of Nov 8, 2001 (21 *Recep-Hicri* 1422) to the author and various conversations with the author.

¹¹⁰ For a general history of the *tekke* see Hasluck 1929, 531, Koca 2001b. and Noyan (Dedebaba) 2002, 264-5. Although Noyan talks about two different *dergâh-tekkes* with the names given above, in reality both represent the same *dergâh-tekke*.

¹¹¹ Koca 2001b.

¹¹² Hülya Küçük 2003, 259-260.

¹¹³ Mango 1999, 28-9.

are some discrepancies concerning the relevant dates, “it is said that Zübeyde joined her husband at *Papaz Köprüsü* [‘the Priest’s Bridge’ situated in the wider location of Katerini] and that her two surviving children, Ömer and Ahmet, died there, probably at the age of three”¹¹⁴.

There is also another Roman connection to Atatürk's early years, which is neither Islamic nor Christian, but Jewish. This was actualized by way of Sabataism with its organic relation to the *Melamiyye-i Nuriyye*, *Mevleviyye* and the *Bektaşîyye*. At some point, Atatürk's schooling became a contested issue between his father and mother, with the former wanting Atatürk to enroll in the ‘Şemsi Efendi School’, which provided a more modern/‘secular’ type of education, and the latter the neighbourhood religious primary school. The final ‘compromise’ sent Atatürk to the ‘Şemsi Efendi School’ after having spent a few days in the local one. Şemsi Efendi, a member of the *Kapani/Kapancı* group of Salonica *dönmes*¹¹⁵, founded the first private primary school, *Mekteb-i Terakki*, in Salonica in the early 1880s. Nevertheless, as Alkan argues, it seems that Atatürk did not study at that school but at the second school of Şemsi Efendi established in the mid-late 1880s¹¹⁶. Alkan states that one section of the *Kapani* group of the Sabatists of Salonica were members of the *Mevleviyye*¹¹⁷. Moreover, there was a Mevlevi dervish presence at the opening ceremonies of *Terakki*-Sabataist institutions, like that of the male section of the *Terakki* Commerce School. “It is also clear that Mevlevi sheikhs sent pupils from time to time upon them being accepted into *Terakki* Schools free of charge”¹¹⁸. Yet as Şişman rightly argues vis-à-vis the possibility of Atatürk being a Sabataist as such, “based on the available evidence, it is not possible for such a claim to stand”¹¹⁹.

In the person of Atatürk, the dichotomous dilemma ‘either Bektashism or Mevlevism’ is resolved in a fully Roman manner within the law of correlation¹²⁰: ‘both Bektashism and Mevlevism’. Yet triadicity-based Islamic Romanity needs its *barzah* for the unification of its two ‘Sunni’ and ‘Shii’ faces.

A Melami Kutbul-aktap or ‘the Assembly of Perfections’

In his famous 1927 *Nutuk* (Speech), Atatürk himself distinctively mentions a very special friendship: ““Abdülkerim Paşa was a very old friend of mine.

¹¹⁴ Mango 1999, 28.

¹¹⁵ Zorlu 2001, 20.

¹¹⁶ Alkan 2003, 41.

¹¹⁷ Alkan 2003, 50.

¹¹⁸ Alkan 2003, 50.

¹¹⁹ Şişman 2008, 133.

¹²⁰ See Chapter 1.

He was a very honourable, zealous, pure-hearted patriot. We had worked together in the same office in Salonica, I as adjutant-major and he as major: we had had a special friendship for years”¹²¹. Atatürk describes *tasavvuf* as a feature of Abdülkerim Paşa’s character and way of life: “It was clear from the conduct and manners of [Abdülkerim Paşa] that he was affiliated to a *tarikât*. It was observed that he was attending several *tekkes*. But no one knew him to be the disciple of a specific *şeyh*”. In fact, the way Atatürk approaches the issue of Abdülkerim Paşa reveals both the identity of that ‘*tarikât*’ and his personal knowledge of its doctrinal particularities. In other words, Atatürk hints at his own religiosity as well. Its key characteristics are concealment and multiple *tarikât* affiliation. As we have seen, for Ibn Arabi the highest form of Islam is expressed in the “concealment of the attributes of sainthood constitut[ing] the sign of [one’s] spiritual perfection and the principal characteristic of his heirs, the *malamâtiyya*, whom he also often calls the ‘*Muhammadians*’”¹²². Similarly, as Holbrook states, “multiple [*tarikât*] affiliation was not uncommon in Ottoman practice, but among the *Melami* it was all but customary to complete a course of inculcation available elsewhere before initiation, and biographies of *Melami* figures usually mention the person’s prior regular order of affiliation. In so far as their *tarikât* transcends the orders, it may be called a *supra-order*”¹²³.

Based on their mode and manner of communication, Öz most aptly notes “this is a sign both of the level as well as the form of this relationship”¹²⁴. Atatürk narrates that Abdülkerim Paşa “named himself ‘*Birinci Hazret, Büyük Hazret*’¹²⁵ (*First Station, Great Station*) vis-à-vis his beliefs and religious understanding and the degree of his spirituality, and to those belonging to his brotherhood circle, to those who he spoke with, he gave [appropriate] level titles such as ‘*hazret, kutup*’ (*station, pole*) according to the qualities that he saw in a person. He used to call me ‘*Kutuplar Kutbu*’ (*The Pole of the Poles*)”¹²⁶. Had Abdülkerim Paşa true and established reasons to bestow the highest Melami title to Mustafa Kemal?

I will never forget that one day during the dinner talk which I explained above my close friend, the late Cevat Abbas Bey brought up by himself the subject of the *Melâmetiyye tarikât*; while making certain observations on the

¹²¹ Atatürk 1966 Vol. I, 126.

¹²² Addas 2002.

¹²³ Holbrook (1992, 15-6.

¹²⁴ Öz 1996, 20.

¹²⁵ In *tasavvuf* terms, *hazret* means station (*makam*), level (*mertebe*) vis-à-vis the proximity to the Divine (Uludağ 1999, 233).

¹²⁶ Atatürk 1966 Vol. I, 126.

topic of Melamism, he became all too eager to bring it forward for consideration. Yet, whatever specific issue [regarding the *Melâmetiyye*] came under scrutiny he could not compete with Mustafa Kemal; the more [Cevat Abbas Bey] expanded the discussion on the various topics he knew concerning the *Melâmetiyye*, the more easily [Mustafa Kemal] Paşa was able to checkmate him by deepening the matter. [Mustafa Kemal] Paşa found the subject so much interesting that he liked too much to turn it into a teasing by repetition¹²⁷.

It was without a doubt the spirited reaction of a Melami Master speaking to a novice who had no idea that in front of him had a person thoroughly steeped in the realities of the *Melamiyye*. The religious song (Hüzzam İlahi) that Atatürk loved the most was the Melami/Mevlevi, *Vaslın Bana Hayat Verir Firkatin Memât*.

Kansu describes Atatürk's telegraphic communications with Abdülkerim Paşa, lasting several hours, during the night of September 25, 1919¹²⁸ (or September 27, 1919¹²⁹). At that time Abdülkerim Paşa was acting as an intermediary between Mustafa Kemal and the Ottoman government. Their personal conversations were conducted within a *tasavvuf* framework and using *tasavvuf* terminology. In those conversations, Abdülkerim Paşa would identify himself as *Hazret-i Evvel* (*First Station*), while Atatürk used for himself the title *Kutbul-aktap* (*Pole of Poles*)¹³⁰. For a person with little knowledge about *tasavvuf*, this would look at least strange, if not something like a joke. However, for people within Roman *tasavvuf*, these titles can never be used merely as a term of endearment or as a mere 'password', as Kansu speculates. Within a *tasavvuf* framework – and so at least for Abdülkerim Paşa – these titles describe certain *tasavvuf* spiritual stations. Was this particular *tasavvufî* reference mono-dimensionally valid only for Abdülkerim Paşa?

On May 18-19, 1911, Atatürk sent his 'friend' Abdülkerim Paşa the following letter from Gelibolu:

Ya Hazreti Kutbul - Aktab
Hazreti salis ünvanı taraf-ı Kutbul Aktab'ından verilmiş olmakla tarih-i [sic.
- possible a printer's error for *tarik-i*] *müstâkim saliklerinden olduğuna*
suphe kalmayan Fethi kardeş, bir emri risalet penahi zımında ol canib-i
kutsiye revan oldu. Sen ki mahbub-u kulüb ve erkan-ı kadime-i mağlumsun.
Lazımdır ki buna garami ilahisinden mevsul paygamber uhuvveti

¹²⁷ Tezer 1995, 113.

¹²⁸ Kansu 1969 Vol. I, 322.

¹²⁹ Atatürk 1966 Vol. I, 27.

¹³⁰ Kansu 1969 Vol. I, 324.

layetazelzül Fethi'yi deragaş edesiz. Bu emri risalet penahi çeşmani amik-i uhuvvetinden buseçin olası. Ey deryayı amik bi payan uhuvvetin kahraman nadir ül emsali! Sen gören, seni seven, senin mucizat-ı meveddetini müşahade eden erkan- ı meşhureden Selanik meydan dedesi bu fakir Kemal yeni tizi rütbe-i içtihađın tayini hususunda zati Kerimulluhtan niyaz eder, Ali can kardeş ise orada bulunduđu takdire gözlerinden tarađı fakiranedan öpmek vecibe ola. Kerimçiğim, seni çok göreçeğim geldi. Hasbıhal etmeye ihtiyacım var. Fethi can ile görüş bana behernehal mektup yaz. Ali can orada ise ciden onu da çok sevdiğim için onun da mektubunu beklerim¹³¹.

In addition to any possible political purpose, this letter is a fully *tasavvufi* text throughout, written by someone with personal knowledge of and involvement in *tasavvuf*. To begin with, Atatürk says that, through the bestowal by Abdülkerim Paşa (*Kutbul-aktap* (The Pole of Poles)) of the title ‘Third Station (*Hazreti Salis*)’ on Fethi ¹³², it is now proven that Fethi belongs to the class of dervishes above the novitiate, i.e., that he is a *salik* of the ‘straight path’ (*tarik-i müstâkim*). This last term is a synonym of the well-known *tasavvufi* term *sırat-ı müstâkim* (the straight path), which occurs at the opening of the *Fatiha Sûresi*, the *Şura Sûresi* (53), and the *Nisa Sûresi* (69).

Apart from other honorific *tasavvufi* references to him, Atatürk calls Abdülkerim Paşa “the rarely matched hero of the deep, boundless sea of brotherhood (*ey deryayı amik bi payan uhuvvetin kahraman nadir ül emsali!*)”. More importantly, pleading with his *kutbul-aktap* Abdülkerim Paşa (*Kerimullah*), the dervish (*fakir*) Kemal, who is a *Selanik meydan dedesi* (*meydan*¹³³ *dede* of Salonica), states that he is “among those famous [*tasavvufi*] persons who have experienced the highest degree of perfection in contemplating [Abdülkerim's] divine miracles of love (*senin mucizat-ı meveddetini müşahade eden erkan-ı meşhureden Selanik meydan dedesi bu fakir Kemal*)”. The content and tone of Atatürk's letter reveals most probably a *tasavvufi* *mürşit* - *mürit* (spiritual guide - disciple) relationship between Abdülkerim Paşa and himself. From the fact that Mustafa Kemal had attained the rank of a *meydan dedesi* as well as the other terminology of his letter, it seems that his *tasavvufi* connection was to the *Selanik Mevlevihâne*, which belonged to the *Şems* branch of the order. That is why Öke states that Abdülkerim Paşa was a Mevlevi¹³⁴ and relates Atatürk only to the *Mevleviyye*,

¹³¹ Öke 1992, 21.

¹³² This person is not identified further.

¹³³ Open space for religious ceremonies in a dervish (usually Bektashi or Mevlevi) convent.

¹³⁴ Öke 1992, 19.

while Öz relates him only to the *Bektaşîyye*¹³⁵. Yet although Abdülkerim Paşa's and Atatürk's *tasavvufî* identity passes through both Bektashism and Mevlevism, it ends elsewhere!!! In his conversations with Professor Frederik Latimer of Princeton University, Atatürk's classmate and close friend in Salonica General Ali Fuat Cebesoy mentions the close friendship between himself, Atatürk and Abdülkerim Paşa, referring to the latter as a Melami *kutup*:

Ha! [he was] *kutup*, *kutup*. Among us, in Islam, there is a kind of religious creed (*mezhep*), the Melami(s). Before human beings came into the world, when the world was created [and] the souls came to be, i.e., three or five thousand years ago, they were in existence. They have their grand representatives (*büyükleri*), their leaders (*reisleri*), and they call their *şeyhs* *kutup*. This *Kutub* [*Abdül*]kerim, ... this Abdülkerim Paşa belonged to the Melami creed...¹³⁶.

Mim Öke's unearthing of the 1911 letter and his urging further research on Atatürk's *tasavvufî* religious identity is of great importance, since, as Mahmut Kılıç argued in a letter to me (Jun 15, 2002), relevant documentary evidence remains scarce and rather difficult to obtain. Kılıç also points out the importance of oral narrations in *tasavvuf* circles, where in some cases the people involved are afraid to share information with outsiders. Misbah (Erkmenkul) Efendi (d. May 5, 2014), the *Şeyh* of the Istanbul *Kadiriyye*, was certainly not one of these.

The availability of relevant information to Misbah (Erkmenkul) Efendi who is considered as *Reisü-l Meşayih* (the *Şeyh* of *Şeyhs*) of our latest times can be judged from the fact that the *Kadiri Asitane* at Tophane in Istanbul represented until the final years of the Ottoman Empire the highest Kadiri authority in Rumelia-Anatolia, from which all its *halifes* received their diplomas¹³⁷. It was the first Kadiri *tekke* established in Istanbul and the resting place of the Second *Pir* of the *Kadiriyye* and founder of its *Rumiyye* branch, İsmail Rumi of Kastamonu (d. 1631-32 AD). The *Kadiri hâne* left a significant mark on the history of last-period Ottoman *tasavvuf* in the person of Ahmet Muhyiddin Efendi (1852 – 1909 AD), who was the head of the *Meclis-i Meşayih* ¹³⁸, the central state organ for controlling the *tekkes*. Interestingly, Mehmet Ali Öz has published a 30-page hand-written *tasavvufî* prayer book (*evrâd-zıkr*) attributed to the First *Pir* of the *Kadiriyye*,

¹³⁵ Öz 1995, 21.

¹³⁶ Cebesoy 2001, 298.

¹³⁷ Yücer 2003, 347.

¹³⁸ İşli, Emin 1997, 245.

Abdülkâdir-i Geylânî that belonged to Atatürk's family in Salonica; it was made available to him by Kâmil Ali Savaş, the son of Hasan Savaş who was the son of Hatice Sümer Hanım (Salonica 1898/99-Bursa 2002 AD) who was the daughter of the brother of his mother (Zübeyde Hanım), Hasan Efendi¹³⁹.

During our conversations in August 2003, Misbah Efendi asserted that Atatürk had a deep knowledge of *tasavvufî* theosophy from many perspectives. According to him, Atatürk was himself the *halife/vekil* (officially designated successor or representative) of one of the leading Melami *şeyhs* in the Balkans. It is interesting to note that Seyyid Muhammad Nur ül-Arabi is said to have had at least 360 *halifes*¹⁴⁰. In other words, Atatürk was an important Melami *şeyh*, or in Melami terminology, a *kutb*¹⁴¹. When I asked him if there was a positive relation between Kemalism and the Islamic *vahdet-i vücud*, Misbah Efendi readily said: "Write this down: During my conversation with Misbah Efendi we wrote together that 'the reforms of Atatürk are harmonious (*uyumlu*) with the philosophy of *vahdet-i vücud*'"¹⁴². He also made a sharp distinction between Arab and Turkish understandings of Islam, stating that "in the Arab lands, Islam is taken as political", and pointing to his heart he continued, "whereas in Turkey, it is held in the heart/consciousness of the nation. For this reason, (Turkish) Muslimness is more valuable"¹⁴³ – remember Tekin Alp's pronouncements on the subject as previously mentioned. Moreover, he pointed out that the dervishes and *tasavvuf* in general require the co-existence of a 'separate worldly' state/state authority and that without a state all is lost. In other words, he pointed out the notion of *sinallilia* between the worldly and the religious. Finally, he argued that the members of the *Nakşibendiyye* were mistaken in making the accusation 'religion is disappearing (*din elden gidiyor*)' about Atatürk's work. In his view, "Atatürk provided the highest service not only to the Turkish nation but to the whole of Islam. How was this done? In a nation under captivity, the

¹³⁹ Öz 2017, 172.

¹⁴⁰ İnan 1976, 284.

¹⁴¹ Misbah Efendi also expressed his certainty of the existence of documentary evidence in archives like those of the Ankara Ethnographical Museum, the Süleymaniye Library (Istanbul) and the Library of *Topkapı Sarayı*. He also stated that he had publicly revealed this information on Nov 6, 1996 in a program presented by Fatih Altaylı and Defne Samyeli on the television station *Kanal D*. It is said that the fire that burned part of the *Istanbul Kadirihâne* on April 2, 1997, might have been an act of arson against Misbah Efendi's expressed views on Atatürk.

¹⁴² Conversations with author August 2003.

¹⁴³ Conversations with author August 2003.

Friday, *Bayram* and funeral prayers cannot be performed. It is only because Atatürk saved this nation that we can now perform the various Islamic prayers. For this, I would like to thank him”¹⁴⁴.

Apart from Atatürk’s conditional spiritual guide Abdülkerim Paşa, other Melami *şeyhs* refer to Atatürk using *tasavvuf* terminology. In his poetry, the Hamzavi-Melami *şeyh* Osman Kemalî (1862-1954 AD) describes Atatürk as *mecma-i kemâlât* ‘the assembly of perfections’¹⁴⁵. This characterisation relates to the *kutb* title, since they both refer back to the concept of the Perfect Man, the inheritor and embodiment of the Muhammadan Reality (*Hakikat-ı Muhammediyye*).

The inter-encapsulation between, on the one hand, Atatürk’s religiosity and the Republican principles, and on the other, Melamism or more generally the *vahdet-i vücud* theosophy (especially its more *batını* expressions) can be observed in the relevant understanding of Melami-related institutions like the *Bilimsel Tasavvufî Yaşam Derneği* (Society for Scholarly *Tasavvuf* Life) – as we shall see, the religion-related parts of Turkish state officially reciprocated by its positive position towards Melamism. In the 7th article of the constitution of this society, the *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* knowledge and way of life, which represent the ‘spirit/essence’ of Islam, are seen as the main reason for the power and duration of the Ottoman Empire. The meaning of *tasavvuf* is correlated with key personalities of Anatolian-Rumelian Islamic/Turkish religiosity such as Edeb Ali, *Ahi Evren*, Hacı Bektaş Veli, Hacı Bayram Veli, Mevlana, the “architect of *vahdet-i vücud*, Muhiddini Arabi, Niyazi Mısri and Muhammad Nur ül-Arabi”¹⁴⁶. As we shall see, the Kemalist Republic connected its policy of ‘Islam as the Turkish national religion’ with these and other similar religious personalities. In this light, the Kemalist Republic and its principles are understood by *Melamis* as fully in line with ‘real’ Islam, and Atatürk as the person who realized it: “*The Muhammadan Conscience, which had been offended* [by the anti-religious stance of unconditionally Westernophile liberals and that of the distortion of real Islam by the Islamists in the late Ottoman Empire and abroad] ... *gave a violent birth to the Republic*. Again, *Hazreti Arabacı İsmail* [Ankaravî Melâmi Efendi] was the person who spiritually expressed *the architect of this birth*, i.e., *Muhammed Nur’ül Arabi, whose exterior commander was Kemal Atatürk*”¹⁴⁷.

¹⁴⁴ Conversations with author August 2003.

¹⁴⁵ Doğramacı 1977, 88.

¹⁴⁶ *Bilimsel Tasavvufî Yaşam Derneği* 1990, 9.

¹⁴⁷ *Bilimsel Tasavvufî Yaşam Derneği* 1990, 9.

There is a widespread belief among the Melami, to whom İsmail Efendi was a member, that Mustafa Kemal held him in great respect. It is related that when once strolling in Ulus and as he passed by the coffeehouse where İsmail Efendi was habitually used for conversations, Atatürk gave him a military salute and that Arabacı received the greeting in a polite manner by pretending to stand up. After some former CUP members and members of the [Westernist/Islamist] Progressive [Republican Party [TCF]] who opposed Mustafa Kemal were arrested after attempting to assassinate him in İzmir and were caught (May 1926), it is said that Arabacı İsmail Ağa said, “They cannot do anything to Gazi Mustafa Kemal. He is under my own protection.” (M. Fazlı Güvenç, in Bedreddin *Varidat* Commentary, 1982[148])¹⁴⁹.

The word translated here as ‘protection’ is the Turkish word, *tasarruf*, (take care of, handling, etc.) which corresponds to the Roman Orthodox Christian divine *oikonomia*.

In one of his later works (1990), the Melami writer Yusuf Ziya İnan argues that the Kemalist Republic and principles are virtually a copy of the ‘Medina Constitution’¹⁵⁰. The main reason for the disparate state of the Islamic world is that Islam is not understood from a point of view pertaining to ‘God’s unity’: “the events and the conditions are not lived out according to the religious attitudes and beliefs, and are not seen through the eyes, of exalted [religious personalities] such as Mevlana, Abdülkadir Geylânî [the ‘patron-saint’ of the *Kâdiriyye*], Muhiddini Arabî, Muhammed İkbal of Pakistan, Yunus Emre, Hacı Bayram Velî, , Ahmet-el Rifaî [the ‘patriarch’ of the *Rifaiyye*], and Muhammad Nur ül-Arabî”¹⁵¹. We can see here – and shall further see in our discussion - a doctrinal inter-encapsulation between Roman Islam and the Kemalist Republic and principles, which in the Melami understanding represent the form of government most suited to the real spirit of Islam.

Thirteen years after I had validly formed the opinion of Atatürk’s intrinsic relation to *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* Islam and particularly the *Melamiyye*, and five years after my relevant interview in the daily *Akşam* newspaper, *Laiklik, Vahdet-i Vücud felsefesiyle şekillendi* [*Turkish Secularism was shaped by the Islamic Philosophy of Vahdet-i Vücud (Unity of Being)*] (October 3rd, 2011), I satisfactorily saw the publication of a book by Baran

¹⁴⁸ Muhammed Nuru’l-Arabî. *Vâridât Şerhi* [Commentary on the Şeyh Bedreddin’s *Vâridât*]. Translated by Fazlı Güvenç. İstanbul: Bayrak Yayınları, 1982.

¹⁴⁹ Demirci 2020.

¹⁵⁰ A legal document of early Islam in which the relations among Muslims, Jews, Christians and pagans are envisaged as cordial. On the ‘Medina Constitution’, see, for example, Lecker 2004.

¹⁵¹ İnan 1989, 7.

Aydın, *Hankâh [Hegumen(ion)]* (2016) in which he further argued for the founder of modern Turkey being a high-rank Melami. In a similar line, Aydın argues that Atatürk was “a Melami” who “saw the world through the same frame as Ibn Arabi”, and consequently, “he remains [largely] unknown to both Atatürkists and anti-Atatürkists”¹⁵². Thus, unless, you understand this and act accordingly, you cannot understand his religious, political and historical writings and endeavours.

The same doctrinal and attitudinal synergy can be found also in Bektashi-Alevi and, to certain extent, in Mevlevî writings, such as those of Bedri Noyan (Dedebaba), Koca Turgut (Halifebaba), and the scholar and Mevlevî *şeyh*, Abdülbâki Gölpınarlı. Mahmut Kılıç has said that, in general, the Bektashis/Alevis and the Melamis consider Atatürk as a kind of *Mehdi* (the 12th Imam expected to return to purify Islam, the Muslim Messiah) and *Kutup* (Pole) respectively, while the *Nakşibendis* see him as *Dejjal* (the anti-Christ)¹⁵³. The religious inter-encapsulation between, on the one hand, the Bektashis, the Mevlevis (dominated by their *Şems* branch) and the Melamis, and on the other hand, the Kemalist Republic, can be seen from the fact that the former’s whole-hearted support for the Republic remained equally constant, even though the Bektashis and the Mevlevis as *tarikats* were banned in 1925 while the Melamis were not. Seyyid Muhammad Nur ül-Arabi was actively against all those who were exploiting ‘Sufis’ and the *tarikats*, particularly the *Şeriatist* moralistic *ulema* of the 19th-century de-Romanised Ottoman Empire: “He was so opposed to the religious hierarchy and the *tekke* fanatics that even though he entered various *tarikats* he vehemently avoided *tarikat şeyh*-ism[, i.e., a hereditary allocation of *tarikat* posts inter- relating with a degenerate spiritual state vis-à-vis *tasavvuf* knowledge]”¹⁵⁴. Indeed, “among other things, if we look carefully at the prohibition of words like *şeyh*, *bey*, *köle*, at the removal of titles and of marks signifying noble families, and at the abolition of the *tekkes* which Atatürk effected, it will be understood that these can be done only by a Melami or a person who thinks as a Melami”¹⁵⁵.

Atatürk’s years in Syria (1905-1907 AD) brought him face to face with the realities of non-Roman Arab Islam. According to his relative and life-long friend, Ahmet Fuat Bulca, “When he came back to Salonica after two years of service in the Arab lands, Mustafa Kemal, who had started his military life as a staff captain [there], was virtually a different man.

¹⁵² Aydın 2023.

¹⁵³ Letter to the author (June 15, 2002).

¹⁵⁴ İnan 1971, 82.

¹⁵⁵ İnan 1976, 283.

Especially on the issue of religion and spirituality...”¹⁵⁶. Bulca also explains:

In our discussions, he frequently explained what he had heard and seen about the religious structures of the Arabs and how they could deliberately use this factor against us. He would give examples of the total dissimilarity between the viewpoint and practices of Syrian Islam and that of ours. He appreciated debate as to the connection between [on the one hand] real Islam and, [on the other hand] the Wahhabism of the English and the ideas of [this] particular creed which virtually claimed proprietorship over the structure of [the whole Islamic] religion¹⁵⁷.

At that time, Atatürk also busied himself with examining books relating to Christianity and Judaism¹⁵⁸. This accentuated interest in and acquisition of deep knowledge about Islam and religions in general which followed Atatürk’s time in Syria came also from his close relation to two important *tasavvufi* statesmen. After he returned to Salonica, Atatürk “was coming together with persons who possessed much more correct ideas. Among these was the President of the Salonica Court, and later *Şeyhülislâm* and Minister of Religious Foundations, Mustafa Hayri Efendi, and the author of the four-volume *Osmanlı Müellifleri (Ottoman Authors)*, Bursalı Tahir Bey”¹⁵⁹. In fact, sometime between February and May 1906, Atatürk had illegally travelled to his native Salonica, where he established a branch of his previously formed clandestine revolutionary organization, *Vatan ve Hürriyet Cemiyeti (The Society of the Patrie and Freedom)*, “two terms closely associated with the patriotic poetry of Namık Kemal, their [the revolutionaries’] great source of inspiration”¹⁶⁰. A close look at the founding members of the 1906 *Vatan ve Hürriyet Cemiyeti*’s Salonica cell is revealing: Bursalı Mehmet Tahir, Ömer Naci, Hakkı Baha Pars, İsmail Mahir, and Hüsrev Sami (Kızıldoğan)¹⁶¹. Bursalı Mehmet Tahir (1861–1925 AD) was a prominent *halife* of the founder of third-period Melamism, Seyyid Muhammad Nur ül-Arabi¹⁶². He later joined the CUP, as did Atatürk¹⁶³. Of the other members, Ömer Naci was Bektashi, while Hakkı

¹⁵⁶ Kutay 1997, 123.

¹⁵⁷ Kutay 1997, 124.

¹⁵⁸ Kutay 1997, 124.

¹⁵⁹ Bulca in Kutay 1997, 124.

¹⁶⁰ Mango 1999, 61.

¹⁶¹ Akal 2002, 73.

¹⁶² Gölpınarlı 1992/1931, 328-330.

¹⁶³ Akal 2002, 54.

Baha (Pars) was both a Bektashi and a Freemason¹⁶⁴. As for *Şeyhülislâm* Ürgüplü Hayri Efendi, he was a Bektashi¹⁶⁵ and a Freemason¹⁶⁶. He was also an important member of the CUP¹⁶⁷. It is claimed that his tomb in Ürgüp (*Προκόπη*) was built by the Ecumenical Orthodox Patriarchate¹⁶⁸. In the overall scheme of things, the leading Melami *şeyh* of whom, as Şeyh Misbah Efendi related, Atatürk was a *halife/vekil* must have been Bursalı Mehmet Tahir Efendi.

It was not merely coincidental that in 1923-25 the famous professor of ethics and *tasavvuf*, Mehmet Ali Aynî, published *Şeyh-i Ekber'i Niçin Severim* [*Why I Love the Greatest Şeyh* [i.e., Ibn Arabi]], in the Introduction of which he writes:

I am writing this book with great eagerness, because I will dedicate it to the manifestation of our religion, its present standard-bearer (*din-i mübinimizin alemdâr-ı hâzırı*), His Excellency Gazi Mustafa Kemal Paşa ... If it attains the honor of being accepted by the Gazi Pasa, I shall regard this as a precious reward for my efforts¹⁶⁹.

As Baran Aydın writes in his book, *Hankâh [Hegumen(ion)]*: “One of the most important friends of Bursalı Mehmet Tahir Bey was Mehmet Ali Aynî of the Melami [lovers, ‘derviş’ (*muhip*)].... At the end of his life... he asked the help of Mehmet Ali Aynî for the auctioning of all his works, including his most important one, *Osmanlı Müellifleri*”¹⁷⁰. Mehmet Ali Aynî secured the relevant amount for printing 2000 pieces of that book and gave its revenues to Mehmet Tahir Efendi. Yet the most important part of Bursalı Mehmet Tahir Efendi’s works (including handwritten notes, etc.) remained unpublished. In fact, “a very important person procured the rest of Mehmet Tahir Bey’s archive for 500 liras. That person was Gazi Mustafa Kemal!”¹⁷¹. As Aydın rightly comments, this meant that Atatürk attached a great value to the content and the teachings of those works – something that, as himself had admitted later, not even Mehmet Ali Aynî knew¹⁷².

¹⁶⁴ Koca 2001.

¹⁶⁵ Şevki Koca’s letter to the author dated Nov 8, 2001 (21 *Recep-Hicri* 1422) [also found in *Toplumsal Tarih* [Koca 2001], and Noyan (Dedebaba) 1995, 448 and 2003, Prologue.

¹⁶⁶ Kutay 1998, 358.

¹⁶⁷ Koca 2001 and Zengin 2002, 94.

¹⁶⁸ Arslan 2009, 264.

¹⁶⁹ Aynî 1339 – 1341/1923 – 1925, 161-2.

¹⁷⁰ Aydın 2016, 345-346.

¹⁷¹ Aydın 2016, 346.

¹⁷² Aydın 2016, 346.

The very special relationship between Atatürk and Bursalı Mehmet Tahir did not only stay at that. Not even a single newspaper published something about his passing away after his death. This is one of the regrets of Turkish history. This situation was again rectified by Atatürk... Bursalı Mehmet Tahir was buried at the foot of the grave of one of the Melami [sages], Mehmet İzzî Efendi at the cemetery of *Aziz Mahmud Hüdai Dergâhı*... Up to 1935, this grave was only covered with earth. And who was the one who built it as it is? Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk... Yet the type of this grave is peculiar. It possesses not the classical head and foot stone-columns. Moreover, in the middle of its flat gravestone, it is written his name and profession. Why did Atatürk have the grave of a person of the *Melamet* made in that style?¹⁷³

The answer that Aydın provides is that it follows the Melami tradition in its later expression as represented by the Melami şeyh, Abdülkadir Behli (1839-1923 AD). Although he was exoterically *Nakşibendî-Müceddîdî*, Abdülkadir Behli esoterically adhered fully to *Hamzavi* (*Bayramî Melâmîliği*). Even at the early age of 20, he had finished studying İbnü'l-Arabî's *el-Fütûhâtü'l-Mekkiyye*. "After Bekir Reşad Efendi, it was known as the *Hamzavi kutub* in İstanbul for many years. Hamzavism was interrupted by his son Ahmed Muhtar (d. 1933) during the Republican period"¹⁷⁴. According to Aydın, many prominent *tasavvufî* persons of the time had become his disciples such as the head of the *Çelebi* branch of the *Mevlevîyye*, Abdülhalim Çelebi, the head of the *Bahariye Mevlevîhanesi*, Hüseyin Fahreddin Dede, the head of the *Galata Mevlevîhanesi*, Ahmet Celaledin Dede, the head of *Sütlüce Bektaşî Tekkesi*, Münir Baba, the head of the *Rumeli Hisarî Şehitlik Tekkesi*, Nafî Baba, among others¹⁷⁵. It is related that most of the Mevlevis accepted Abdülkadir-i Belhî as a *kutup*¹⁷⁶-note here the absence of the *Yenikapı Mevlevîhanesi*. We will see the inter-encapsulation of the views of *Hamzavi* (*Bayramî Melâmîliği*) and Kemalism on the issue of the *tekkes* later on. As far as the grave styles were concerned, Atatürk had applied the late Melami style relating to Abdülkadir Behli to the grave of Bursalı Mehmet Tahir Efendi centred upon the dictum: "bi ser ü pa" (headless footless)¹⁷⁷. It was that specific style, as Aydın has pointed

¹⁷³ Aydın 2016, 347.

¹⁷⁴ Azamat, Nihat. "Abdülkâdir-i Belhî." In *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. Accessed August 2, 2023. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/abdulkadir-i-belhi>.

¹⁷⁵ Aydın 2016, 351.

¹⁷⁶ See above, Nihat Azamat.

¹⁷⁷ Aydın 2016, 353.

out, that Atatürk applied upon his own grave, the *Anıtkabir Mausoleum* in Ankara¹⁷⁸.

After the translation of Aynî's book into French, Louis Massignon launched a series of criticisms against Ibn Arabi. Having been prompted to the task by Aynî, Veled Çelebi (İzbudak) – one of Atatürk's 'own' - answered back to Massignon's attacks on the Şeyh al-Akbar¹⁷⁹. In a similar line, Bezmi Nusret Kaygusuz presented Atatürk with his book on the pre-eminent *vahdet-i vücud* master and revolutionary, the Turco-Greek Şeyh Bedreddin. According to Sevki Koca, Bezmi Nusret Kaygusuz was a Melami member of the CUP¹⁸⁰.

A closing note of Atatürk's religiosity: when we obviously accept Atatürk's affiliation to the *Melamiyye*, we automatically enter into the search for his previous *tarikât* identity by-default since being a Melami presupposes a former membership to a 'canonical' *tarikât*. And, as we have discussed, as far as the founder of modern Turkey is concerned that was the Şemş (Bektaşî/Alevî) branch of the *Mevlevîyye*.

In general, as one of Atatürk's close ideological associates, Falih Rıfkı Atay states: "There are two main sources in Atatürk's accumulated consciousness, namely [the Bektashi] Namık Kemal and [the Akbarian] Ziya Gökalp"¹⁸¹. Another important influence on Atatürk's worldview was for the philosopher and poet Tevfik Fikret (1867 -1915 AD), a key link in the chain of Roman modernists. Admiring his "revolutionism (*inkılapçılık*)"¹⁸², Atatürk used to refer to himself as "*perestîşkâran-ı Fikret*" i.e., "*one of the worshippers of Fikret*"¹⁸³. Fikret's Romanity relates not only to Islam but also to Christianity. His mother was the daughter of a Greek Christian couple from the island of Chios,¹⁸⁴ who after losing her family around the time of the Greek Revolution of 1821 converted to Islam. Fikret has been the subject of accusations of 'irreligion', particularly by Islamists. Yet Fikret's son, Haluk and A. Hamdi Tanpınar state that Fikret was a person who believed in God (*Allah*)¹⁸⁵. Sertel argues that "in his youth, Fikret was religious. What distinguishes his poetry of that period is its religious mysticism, which later served as a substratum for his more 'worldly'

¹⁷⁸ Aydın 2016, 355-363.

¹⁷⁹ Güngör 2003.

¹⁸⁰ Şevki Koca's letter to the author dated Nov 8, 2001 (21 *Recep-Hicri* 1422). See also Koca 2001.

¹⁸¹ Asena 1981, 41.

¹⁸² Borak 1998b., 72.

¹⁸³ Borak 1998b., 70.

¹⁸⁴ Fuat 1992, 11-2.

¹⁸⁵ Bulut 1999b., 79.

worldview. His poems such as ‘*Allah-ü-ekber*’, ‘*Kamis-i Yusuf*’, ‘*Sabah ezanında*’, ‘*Ramazan*’, and ‘*Köyün Mezarlığında*’ are expressions of that mysticism¹⁸⁶. Interestingly, Atatürk was introduced to Namık Kemal and Tevfik Fikret during his time at the Military School at Manastır by his Bektashi friend¹⁸⁷ and the future public spokesman of the CUP, Ömer Naci¹⁸⁸.

Atatürk and the Roman Christian *Barzah*

The 1914 *Medrese Reform (İslah-ı Medaris)* constitutes an exemplary case in which the Christian head of the Roman bicephalous eagle serves as a Romanising *barzah* for transmitting non-Roman foreign modern ideas into its Islamic counterpart. Its main protagonists were, on the one hand, Roman Christian priests, and, on the other hand, Atatürk and *Şeyhülislâm Ürgüplü Hayri Efendi* – the latter religiously united by their Bektashi and generally Roman *vahdet-i vücud* religiosity. And this was possible only within the Roman Christian-Islamic inter-encapsulation. “In contrast to the ignorance of a large part of the Muslim religious functionaries, Atatürk was especially affected by the modern behaviour and thought-structure of the Orthodox Christian clergy, and also by a small number of similar Muslim religious functionaries”¹⁸⁹. In addition to the religious environment of his native Salonica, Atatürk’s years as military attaché in the Bulgarian capital, Sofia, served as a source of proximity to Roman Christianity (‘Orthodoxy’). What attracted Atatürk’s attention in particular was that apart from theological knowledge, these Roman Christian functionaries were at the same time specialists in various scientific fields and informed of the affairs and laws of their state¹⁹⁰. Atatürk observed here a modernized Roman *sinallilia*. Notably, it was in May of 1914 when Mustafa Kemal presented himself to the Bulgarian National Day Ball in *Bektaşî Yeniçeri* attire. Moreover, he witnessed the positive role that the local Roman Christian priests of the time had played in spreading the idea of nationalism and transforming the Greek and Slavic religious communities into modern nations¹⁹¹. In other words, he understood how the religious functionaries of the national churches had contributed to the creation of the overall worldly/national framework of which they were part.

¹⁸⁶ Sertel 1969, 200

¹⁸⁷ Koca 2001.

¹⁸⁸ Gençosman 1981, 13, and Borak 1998b., 16.

¹⁸⁹ Meydan 2002, 484.

¹⁹⁰ Meydan 2002, 484.

¹⁹¹ Kutay 1998, 181-182.

Atatürk did not consider his observations as a private matter but attempted to influence the religious policy of the Ottoman state. First, he sent a report to the Ottoman Ministry of War. Subsequently, he wrote a long letter to the Ottoman *Şeyhülislâm*, Ürgüplü Hayri Efendi, who was also holding the post of Minister of Pious Foundations in 1914. The letter included a detailed comparison between the Ottoman *hocas* and the Roman Christian *papaz* (priests). Several years later, during his exile in Malta immediately after the Armistice of Mudros (1918), *Şeyhülislâm* Hayri Efendi mentioned that letter to Rauf Orbay, saying that Atatürk's observations and warnings had played a key role in the drafting of the 1914 law on the *Medrese Reform (Islah-ı Medaris)*¹⁹².

The *Islah-ı Medaris* constituted a turning point in the history of Ottoman education, modernization and *laik*-isation. In Mehmedoğlu's view, it marked the clear and permanent victory of "Western over traditional Ottoman education"¹⁹³. Yet this was not unconditional Westernism, since this 'Western' education was not actualized according to the form that Westerners had introduced it in the Empire¹⁹⁴. As Zengin demonstrates in his detailed study of *medreses* and religious education during the Second Constitutional period, the role of personalities was very central in preparing and bringing about these reforms¹⁹⁵. The contribution of *Şeyhülislâm* Hayri Efendi was crucial¹⁹⁶. The reforms, which were radical and systematic, included the re-organization of *medreses* on lines similar to the worldly-oriented *mekteps* and the renewal of their curriculum, and also the establishment of a specialized *medrese* for the education of religious scholars. The implications of the '*Islah-ı Medaris* Regulations' were far-reaching. Zengin states that "except for some minor changes, this system would continue until the abolition of the *medreses* [in 1924]; moreover, in our opinion, they also constituted the model for the programs and the establishment of the *İmam-Hatip* Schools and the Theology Faculties that were founded in the Republican period ..." ¹⁹⁷.

¹⁹² Meydan 2002, 484-485.

¹⁹³ Mehmedoğlu 2001, 25.

¹⁹⁴ Mehmedoğlu 2001, 25.

¹⁹⁵ Zengin 2002, 95-6.

¹⁹⁶ Zengin 2002, 95. Hayri Efendi was appointed to the post of *Şeyhülislâm* on March 12, 1914.

¹⁹⁷ Zengin 2002, 95.

Roman Kemalism: The Apex of the Roman Modernists

The core of Kemalism's Romanity lies in its indispensable anti-Imperialism. Referring to the Christian part of Romanity, Romanides states:

this does not mean that the Roman avoids alliances. No. He/She is neither naïve nor a daydreamer. Yet at no time he/she becomes spiritually/intellectually or politically a slave of his/her ally. He/She becomes a loyal ally staying always true to what was agreed upon, but at the same time he/she remains ideologically independent¹⁹⁸.

The central common principle of the Roman modernists

was an unconditional and deep emotional devotion to the *patrie* (*vatan*) either in its Ottoman (from Namık Kemal to the radical Young Turks) or Turkish form (as seen in Gökalp and Atatürk). The liberals, by contrast, showed more admiration for London and Paris than for their own country¹⁹⁹.

As Celal Bayar states: “Here I want to point out one indisputable quality of Atatürk, now and in the future: HE WAS A CONSCIOUS ANTI-IMPERIALIST”²⁰⁰. Attila İlhan points out that “right up to his death, Mustafa Kemal Pasha did not make any treaty with a Western nation [meaning a political agreement of strategic importance]. The British King honoured him with a personal visit, but he did not sign any agreement. [Yet only] 144 days after his death, an agreement with the British was signed [by the İnönü regime]. Atatürk knew the West as an enemy”²⁰¹. A leading Kemalist, Mahmut Esat Bozkurt (1892-1943 AD), who served as Minister of Justice from 1924 until 1930, stated in 1940:

Communism nourishes the idea of the inclusion of all humanity into one single regime cause all to live in a communist federation. The Turkish Revolution ... rejected all types of imperialism”; “National Socialism [Nazism] is imperialist. No chance of accepting it, the Turkish Regime rejects it as a matter of principle and considers this type of tendencies a

¹⁹⁸ Father John Romanides 2002, 12.

¹⁹⁹ Kitsikis 1998, 157.

²⁰⁰ Celal Bayar 1978, in İnsel 2002, 667, capitalization in original. Some academics use the terms ‘Left Kemalism’ (*Sol Kemalizm*) and ‘Right Kemalism’ (*Sağ Kemalizm*) for the understandings of Kemalism represented by thinkers-politicians such as Attila İlhan and Celal Bayar respectively. Here we see that the representatives of both trends are in full agreement on the anti-Imperialist character of Kemalism. In the conditions of the time, this meant that Kemalism was essentially anti-Western.

²⁰¹ İlhan 2003.

crime”; “Fascism (the Italian [i.e., Mussolini’s] regime): This state system: ... 3. It is imperialist. This idea is something detested by the Turkish regime²⁰².

Mango aptly writes:

The outside world took a long time to understand Atatürk’s policy. It is still finding it difficult to place the country he shaped. He is said to have steered Turkey towards Europe and the West. This is true to the extent that the civilization to which he aspired had, and still has, its center in the West. But his allegiance was to an ideal, not a geographical area. The ideal of catching up with modern civilization wherever it may be found, and of contributing to its further development...²⁰³.

As Atilla İlhan states: “I have read the complete works of Mustafa Kemal. Not once did he utter the word ‘Westernization’. Kemal Pasha talks about ‘modernization’ not Westernization”²⁰⁴- exactly as Gökalp did.

Partly paraphrasing Ancel, Kitsikis states on the issue of religion that the “eastern modernists”²⁰⁵, from Namık Kemal to Atatürk, via Gökalp, “had to confront the problem of religion. Islam was *part* of the people’s soul. At the same time its institutions were creating obstacles to the progress of the *patrie*. How could they liberate [the *patrie*] from religious encirclement without betraying its soul? Confronted with this almost insoluble difficulty ... they ended up rejecting Islam in order to fight the West with its own weapons, hoping that the West would have no place in a state completely westernized”²⁰⁶. Although Kitsikis is not literally correct in stating that the Kemalists rejected ‘Islam’ as such - indeed, nothing could be further from the truth - or that the Republican state was ‘completely’ westernized, Kitsikis fully grasps the mentality of the Kemalists in overcoming a threat through the threat itself. As Ibn Arabi advises:

One can only protect oneself from a thing through the thing itself ... So, one protects oneself from iron with iron. Similarly, the command of Muhammad

²⁰² Bozkurt 2003/1940, 193-4.

²⁰³ Mango 1999, 538.

²⁰⁴ Interview with Atilla İlhan by Muharrem Coşkun - Necmettin Çakmak (March 22-23-24, 2003) in M.Gazete.

²⁰⁵ The term describes a line of public figures that subscribed to a middle road vis-à-vis the modernization of the Empire and Turkey. They occupied the ground between the Ottoman conservatives/Islamists and the unconditional liberal Westernophiles.

²⁰⁶ Kitsikis 1996, 258.

ordains the following prayer: 'I take in Thee my refuge from Thee!' Grasp that!²⁰⁷.

In May 1931, the Third Congress of the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, CHP) adopted its six 'fundamental and unchanging principles', namely: Republicanism (*Cumhuriyetçilik*), Nationalism (*Milliyetçilik*), 'Populism' (*Halkçılık*), Statism (*Devletçilik*), 'Secularism' (*Laiklik*), and 'Revolutionism' (*İnkılapçılık*)²⁰⁸, symbolically depicted in the Party's emblem, the '*Altı Ok*' (Six Arrows). It took another six years for these principles to be incorporated into the Turkish Constitution (Article 2, Amendment, Feb 5, 1937). They became known as the Six Principles of Kemalism.

In reality, all these principles inter-encapsulate constantly around one another, and all of them around the essential axis of Independence. The whole scheme has a *vahdet-i vücüd* substratum, not only by way of the Gökalpian schema but, as we shall see, the worldly schema these principles form *sinallilistically* relates to a Roman Turkish *vahdet-i vücüd* Islam represented by the Kemalist policy of 'Islam as the Turkish national religion' of 1932. The Kemalist principles are the dynamically interrelating singulars of a holistic (*bütünleş(tir)ici*) and unitarian-unifying (*birleş(tir)ici*) monistic schema. When asked about his most important revolutionary reform, Atatürk himself replied: "All that I did is inter-related and necessary"²⁰⁹. In philosophical terms, Kili states that Kemalism is a whole, which is formed and turned into "a coherent system" by the principles of Republicanism, Nationalism, *Laiklik*, Statism, Populism, and Revolutionism²¹⁰. It is not possible to define this whole by emphasizing one or just some of the principles. Yet Kili most interestingly states that "in general it needs to be said that in Kemalist thought every principle gains functionality, validity and consistency only with the existence, mutual influence, direction, and the making into a whole of the other principles"²¹¹. Let us now examine Atatürkist state-religion relations, alias *laiklik*.

²⁰⁷ Özelsel 1996, 61.

²⁰⁸ Ahmad 1993, 63. *İnkılapçılık* can be translated both as 'revolutionism' and 'reformism'. In practice, the former interpretation was favoured by the Kemalists and the latter by the conservatives, like İnönü, and the Westernist liberals of the CHP.

²⁰⁹ Kılıç Ali in Babacan 2004, 20.

²¹⁰ Kili 1981, 1.

²¹¹ Kili 1981, 1.

The Roman *Vahdet-i Vücud* Turkish Republic

New bases of sovereignty

For the Atatürkists, it was “absurd” and “erroneous” that Turkish sovereignty and nationhood be based on Islamic concepts and structures²¹². It seems that Atatürk nurtured in secret the idea of a republic as an ideal political vision as early as 1906²¹³, something that may have been a partial reason for his almost total marginalization by the CUP leadership. In the changing conditions during 1919, Atatürk began to talk more pragmatically about the establishment of a republic. From that time onward, Atatürk’s republican goal was ‘a national secret’, a secret which a number of political actors knew about and many suspected. It is often assumed that Atatürk commanded the national liberation movement right from the beginning. In reality, until March 1920, despite it being largely discredited and fragmented, the initiative was fully in the hands of the CUP²¹⁴. Even after that time, the efforts of old influential members in preventing Atatürk from assuming the leadership of the national liberation movement in full continued and would cease only after Talat Paşa’s assassination in March 1921 when the dominant wing of the CUP, i.e., the Talat Paşa faction, gathered around Atatürk²¹⁵. In general, as Sorgun points out, “after the Republic was

²¹² Davison 1998, 148.

²¹³ Egeli 1959, 40-41.

²¹⁴ Akal 2002, 370-371.

²¹⁵ Akal 2002, 369. In this perspective, concerning a number of events, as for example the bloody fratricidal conflict in the Pontus area, although Atatürk was sent to pacify the area by military means, he had limited control over the overall state of affairs; concerning the possible massacres of civilian Pontic Christians that he had foresaw, he “had take[n] steps to prevent such eventuality” (ending up in failure) (BBC News Türkçe “İngiliz İstihbarat Belgelerinde Mustafa Kemal [Mustafa Kemal in British Intelligence Documents].” Youtube. November 10, 2019. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uiPvKWx5NDw&t=89s>, Accessed Oct 28, 2023). This can be seen on a number of occasions. First, his perception of the conflict was that it was essentially political without any racial dimensions; for few days after his landing in Samsun on May 19, 1919, he stated in his telegram to the Istanbul Government that: “if the Roman Pontic Greeks abandon their political endeavours that effect negatively the Muslims, the Islamic gangs will disappear” (May 22, 1919) (*Atatürk’ün Tanım Telegraf ve Beyanmeleri*, edited by Nimet Arsan published as “*Atatürk’ün Söylev ve Demeçleri, Dördüncü Cilt*”. Ankara: Türk İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü, 1964, 24-25). And second, during the secret deliberations on the “Pontus Issue” in the Great National Assembly in 1921 in Ankara, there were a lot of

established some persons who were members of CUP distanced themselves from Mustafa Kemal. But the great majority of CUP members chose to stand by his side”²¹⁶. In the end, the Atatürkist republican ideal materialized with the declaration of the Republic on Oct 29, 1923. Yet before that, both the Sultanate and its ‘adjacent’ Caliphate had to go.

Separating it from the Caliphate, Mustafa Kemal had sentenced the institution of the Sultanate to perpetual political oblivion on 1st November 1922. In his speech in the Assembly, he forcefully declared:

Gentlemen, sovereignty and the sultanate are not given to anyone because scholarship proves that they should be so; or through discussion or debate. Sovereignty and the sultanate are taken by strength, by power and by force. It was by force that the sons of Osman seized the sovereignty and the sultanate of the Turkish nation ... Now the Turkish nation has rebelled ... has effectively taken sovereignty and the sultanate into its own hands. This is an accomplished fact. The question under discussion is not whether or not we should leave the sultanate and sovereignty to the nation. That is already an accomplished fact – the question is merely how to give expression to it. This will happen in any case. If those gathered here in the Assembly and everyone else could look at this question in a natural way, I think they would agree. Even if they do not, the truth will still find expression, but some heads may roll in the process²¹⁷.

According to the Kemalists, the institution of the Caliphate was damaging the Turkish nation religiously and politically, as well as the Islamic world as a whole. For the Kemalists, not only the Caliphate was

criticism on the handling of the problem that it yet occurred during the extraordinary circumstances of the war period, and that even if the Turks were still at war, the idea of them and the Pontic Greeks living together had to be somehow safeguarded. (TBMM Gizli Celse Zabıtları, c. 13-14-16-20-22, Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları (in Özgören 2017, 319)). The 2019 landing of the Greek Army in Smyrna constituted the peg that ignited the last phase of the bloody events in the Pontus area – as it was the 1918 occupation of Istanbul by the Frankish *Entente* Powers. As time passed, Venizelos came to consider the Smyrna Campaign way more important than the Pontic struggle and, in the end, delegated the fate of the Pontic Orthodox Christian Greeks from state independence to them being the subjects of a neo-Gnostic Monophysite Great Armenian State vitally connected to American/English Liberal Imperialism. The role of the Western Imperialism (especially English, Russian) under its local *Megali Idea* proved instrumental in setting the scene again for another fratricidal intra-Roman conflict.

²¹⁶ Sorgun 2003, 11.

²¹⁷ Zakaria 1988, 207-208, quoting from Mortimer, Edward 1981, *Faith and Power*, London.

detrimental to Islam because it was wrongly identified by the Islamists as well as the Western Christian world with Islam as such but also the Turkish National Assembly inter-encapsulated much closer and truly with unchangeably essential Islamic *şariat*-related precepts. Addressing the people of Izmir in January 1923, Atatürk said:

Now I need to explain that in the essence of [the Islamic] religion, there is no absolute statement to the effect that governments shall take this form or that. But it was made clear upon what principles government would have to be based. This is clear and definite. One of these principles, and the most important of them, is Şura (Consultation)²¹⁸. This principle is Allah's direct command. Even the person who was the Prophet was not to conduct business on his own initiative, he was to do it by consultation. This being the case, the people who attain the headship of the Islamic community after him will submit absolutely to the same principle. Another principle is the principle of justice. While Şura fulfills the transactions of the people, it must fulfil them justly. [That is] because a şura that is isolated from justice cannot be one commanded by Allah. For that şura to be capable of distributing justice rightly it needs to be specialized. Our Assembly [the T.B.M.M.] and the government made up of persons who enjoy its confidence, is in a form and nature that is fully commanded by the şariat. In view of that, can the question of another Caliphal office be raised? ... Gentlemen, as far as the Caliph and Caliphate is concerned, this cannot be considered with regard only to Turkey and the Turkish people. Perhaps it could be envisaged as an office encompassing and common to the whole Islamic world²¹⁹.

²¹⁸ It is interesting to note that in his discussion of the Medina Constitution in relation to Prophet Muhammad's Meccan experience, Father John Romanides states: "However, the Meccan experience should not be used as a standard for judging Muhammad's theology of society, since the Meccans never gave him the opportunity to put his prophethood to work during his initial stay with them. Perhaps what frightened the Meccans most was the association of Muhammad's prophethood with that of Moses which to the Arab mentality would have meant an overlordship similar to the kingships of neighbouring lands. Within the Meccan situation the acceptance of Muhammad's prophethood would have meant at least a *consultative chairmanship* within the *malā* (senate), if not outright control since accepting him would be tantamount to the acceptance of the direct rule of God, which no doubt was a preposterous idea to the powerful merchants of Mecca who could tolerate no interference in their traditional associations and business interests" (emphasis ours, Father John Romanides 1968, accessed Dec. 12, 2010).

²¹⁹ Mahmut 1929-1930, 115, emphasis ours. Durukan (1998), from which this citation is taken, is a compilation of articles, speeches etc of various - mainly Kemalist - figures of the Atatürk's period (mainly). This particular speech is included in a series of articles written by the Deputy for Siirt, Mahmut. It was titled

Moreover, as Atatürk also argued in the 1923 İzmit speech, the Turkish nation was hopelessly ill-equipped for the enormous task of liberating and uniting all Muslims in “a single point” under the Caliph; and even if Turkey could achieve that aim the liberated Muslim nations could say, for example, “Thank you very much. But we now want our independence, because in modernity it is the nation which is the basic unit of political organization”²²⁰.

According to Nomer, “[t]he removal of the Caliphate, the establishment of the Presidency of Religious Affairs to take the place of the abolished Ministry of Religious Affairs (*Şeri‘iye Vekâleti*) and the Law for the Unification of Education (*Tevhid-i Tedrisat Kanunu*) showed the two dominant principles present in the foundations of the Turkish Republic. One of the two unchanging and indispensable principles is ‘*national sovereignty*’ (*millî hakimiyet*); as for the other, which today is called ‘*laiklik*’, it is the state religious policy”²²¹. The religious policy of the Turkish Republic came into official being on March 3, 1924, after the Grand National Assembly (*T.B.M.M.*) had examined, debated and finally adopted the articles of these three proposed laws in their totality²²². During these discussions, declaring that the abolition of the Caliphate was “a firm revolutionary reform in historical Islam” with repercussions for the whole Islamic world, the Minister of Justice, Seyit Bey, a well-known Islamic Law Professor in the *Darülfünun* (University of Istanbul), stated:

Rather than being a religious issue, the problem of the Caliphate is a structural one. It is not one of the problems of faith. ... *It does not relate to faith.* This is because Caliphate means ‘government’. It is directly a matter of the nation. *It is contingent upon the needs of the times. When you look at the Koran, you see ... there is not a single verse about the Islamic Caliphate.* As far as government is concerned, the Koran shows us [only] two principles. The first is ‘consultation/deliberation’ (*meşveret*), which is present in the universal civilisation of today - something the Koran preached to us 1300 years ago²²³. *Precisely because the issue of the Caliphate is a worldly and political problem,* there are no details about these problems in the *şariat* texts (*nususu şeriye*). ... The reason for this is that, contrary to what is thought, *the Caliphate is not one of the fundamentals of religion. It*

“*Gazi ve İnkılâp*” and published daily in *Milliyet* for 75 days between October 27, 1929 and Feb 6, 1930.

²²⁰ Mahmut 1929-30, 115-121.

²²¹ Nomer 1996, vii

²²² *Ibid.*

²²³ The second is the command of obedience to the rulers to secure law and order in the country.

*changes according to usage and customs (örf ve adet). Its necessity is contingent upon the times*²²⁴.

As we saw in Chapter 4, in his conception of the separation between religion and politics within his essentially inversed-*sinallilia*-based framework, the Akbarian Gökalp made a sharp distinction – not utter division – between the religious as purely spiritual, relating to the Koran and the Prophet's *sunnah*, and the worldly state, essentially relating to social realities (*örf ve adet*, usage and customs). He drew religious support for this distinction by arguing that the Prophet had not specified a form of government for the whole of the Muslim world. In the Kemalist view, it is the re-establishment of the authentic Prophetic Islam, i.e., the Islam which differentiates between religion and politics, that saves and purifies religion. State affairs are purely worldly, and the just, consultative, 'democratic' nature of Islam is recaptured in the form of the *T.B.M.M.*, which represents the people's 'vote'. *This was the foundation stone of Turkish secularism.*

Atatürk understood his decision to abolish the Caliphate as based on the recognition "that it [was] indispensable in order to purify and elevate the Islamic faith, to disengage it from the state of being a *political instrument* which it had been for centuries through habit"²²⁵. Totally in line with *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf*, his view was that Islam had been corrupted by its identification with politics. Mahmud Esad Bozkurt argued that, by distorting the meaning of Islam, the Caliphate was both hindering the development of Turkish national consciousness and keeping the Turkish nation underdeveloped: "The Caliphate ... did not accept any change. Every innovation was called heresy (*bidat*) and any progressive movement blasphemy (*küfür*). Religion was a weapon in the hands of backwardness (*kaytaklık*)"²²⁶. Gökalp described the detrimental effects of the late Ottoman state on Islam: "The state is a legal machinery; it tends to legalize and formalize any social force upon which it touches. It is because of this fact that Islam started to lose its vitality from the moment it began to be fused with the political organization and began to be formalized as a system of law closed against all *ijtihad*"²²⁷. In a totally *vahdet-i vücud* conception, Mahmud Esad Bozkurt argued about the late Ottoman Empire: "... the more

²²⁴ Velidedeoğlu (April 5, 2004) (emphasis ours), quoting from the relevant parts of *T.B.M.M.'s Tutanak Dergisi (Minutes Journal)*. Atatürk had exactly the same views on government and the Koran, namely, that Islam stipulates only the general points of government: "Justice, Consultation, Obedience" (Mahmut 1929- 30, 86)] .

²²⁵ Davison 1998, 151, emphasis ours.

²²⁶ Bozkurt 2003/1940, 216.

²²⁷ Gökalp 1914, 103.

religion and state did not separate from each other, the more religion gave its orders to the state and, together with the oppressive rulers, it was becoming an instrument of tyranny against their subjects. Religion was legitimizing both the rulers and their most terrible actions ... *Religion can be secure and safe only in [people's] hearts (vicdan)*"²²⁸.

Indeed, the Kemalists were consciously aware of:

a. the pre-16th-century fully 'metadoxical' *vahdet-i vücud* period of Ottoman religiosity, which went beyond the 'Sunni'/'Alevi' differentiation and centred on unifying religious personalities like Yunus Emre, Rumi, Hacı Bektaş Veli, Şeyh Bedreddin, etc. It was this period that they identified as the apex of Ottoman glory. On the evening of January 16, 1923, the following conversation took place:

İsmail Müştak: Is the Caliphate politically a profit and strength in Turkey? Or is it a weakness? **Mustafa Kemal:** Do not have any doubts that it is a weakness ... Under any circumstances, the Caliphate is trouble for us. *Before the Ottoman Sultanate assumed the Caliphate, it was the most shining phase of the Ottoman era.* After the assumption of the Caliphate the collapse began²²⁹.

b. the strong possibility that the transfer of the title of the Caliph to Selim I was fictitious²³⁰.

c. the predominantly religious classical Ottoman *sinallilia* (division of labour between the worldly and the religious in differentiated unity), understood as a national religious characteristic, and its formative relation to Kemalist *laiklik*. In his discussion of the relations between the 'Worldly and Religious in Islam', Mahmut Esad Bozkurt argues that Islam differentiated between the worldly and the religious right from the beginning – within, of course, an overall religious framework: "After the Prophet conquered Mecca, he delegated matters of state to the 20-year-old *Attap*, and religious affairs (*diyanet*) to *Maaz*". And he poses the question: "Even if the Caliphate included [both] worldly and religious affairs, can this separation, this *division of labour*, which during his lifetime the Prophet saw as religiously correct (*caiz*), not be counted as a sign that worldly and religious affairs would be able to be separated? For us, there is no doubt at all"²³¹. Indeed, this 'division of labour' between the worldly and religious within an overall religious framework is the essence of the Roman Christian and Roman Ottoman *sinallilia*. According to Bozkurt, this was the 'model' of classical Ottoman state-religion relations. It is significant that Bozkurt

²²⁸ Bozkurt 2003/1940, 218-220, emphasis in original.

²²⁹ Mahmut 1929-30, 91-92.

²³⁰ Bozkurt 2003/1940, 222.

²³¹ Bozkurt 2003/1940, 223, emphasis ours.

sees the prime example of this model in the reign of the totally Akbarian Selim I. Quoting from Mustafa Paşa's *Netayicülvukuat*, Bozkurt states:

One day Selim I became very angry with the pages of Palace and ordered the execution of forty of them. The high officials fell into despair, but none had the courage to say anything. In the end they informed [*Şeyhülislâm*] Zembilli Ali Efendi about the situation. In the night, the Mufti went to Selim I. The following dialogue took place between them:

Selim I: Nothing wrong, I hope! What brings you here in the middle of the night?

Zembilli Ali Efendi: I came to show you the way to pardon the more or less forty people who were condemned to death by your firman.

Selim I: *Hoca*, you are trespassing into the affairs of the world. If you want, let me give you the post of a vizier.

Zembilli Ali Efendi: No, Sir. It is not trespassing into the affairs of the world that I came about, but in order to save your afterlife.

After a long discussion, Selim revoked his order and the forty men were saved from death.

Does not this discussion show that, in the Ottoman Sultanate, even in the reign of Selim I, who is said to be the first [Ottoman] Caliph, the affairs of the world and religion were accepted as being separate?

For us, there is not any doubt at all²³².

Bozkurt continues:

After they had accepted Islam and [also] acquired control of the affairs of state, the Turks separated the Caliphate and the Sultanate, in other words separated the affairs of the world and religion from each other and transformed the Caliphate into a religious institution. And in this, the Turkish national institutions, i.e., the system of the *laik* state, certainly had an effect From every viewpoint, it is seen that the Turks did not comply with the meaning the Arabs gave to the institution of the Caliphate, and although they became Muslims, they formulated government and state according to their national traditions²³³.

If we transliterate Bozkurt's statement into the overall framework of our discussion on Romanity, it means that the Turkish national state traditions are rightly identified with the Roman 'Byzantine'-Ottoman Reality. Indeed, here we see that Bozkurt identifies and accepts fully the Roman Ottoman *sinallilia*. Yet, in a reversal of the position in Roman Ottoman *sinallilia*, where the overall framework is religious, the thrust of Bozkurt's argument

²³² Bozkurt 2003/1940, 224.

²³³ Bozkurt 2003/1940, 224.

comes from the worldly national, in that *sinallilia* is seen as a *national* characteristic fully reflected in Kemalist *laiklik*. In other words, the Kemalist order was envisaged as an inverted *sinallilia* model in which the worldly and the religious retain their ‘division of labour’, yet the overall framework is based on the national worldly.

d. the antinomian nature of the institution of the late Ottoman Caliphate in relation to the dualistically monistic, predominantly religious, classical Ottoman order, in that in the institution had become the focus of the identification of state and religion. In the time before the introduction of the relevant reforms, Professor Şemsettin Günaltay (1883-1961 AD)²³⁴, then teacher of History of Religions and Islamic Philosophy at the *Süleymaniye Medrese* and also of History of Civilization and History of Islamic Nations at *Darülfünun*, stated during one of Atatürk’s dinners:

Sultan Fatih and Sultan Suleyman did not govern this nation only with the provisions of the *şeriat*, but more with their own laws [i.e., the *kanun*]. Moreover, the Caliphate, which was brought to Istanbul by Sultan Yavuz after he conquered Egypt, was not given much importance at that time. ... The Ottomans remembered the Caliphate only after the Russians conquered Crimea. During the negotiations for the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774, the idea was devised of giving the Muslims there a religious connection to the Caliphate in Istanbul, rather than their having no connection at all²³⁵.

Indeed, the Kemalists had a very informed knowledge of Ottoman history. As we have seen, the identification of religion and politics centering on the Caliphate led to the breakdown of the Roman classical Ottoman *sinallilia* and its replacement with a dualist ‘*din ve devlet*’ (‘religion and state’) model, a development concomitant with the rise to ‘power’ of the non-Turkish *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye* and later, of its *Halidiyye* branch.

The abolition of the Caliphate and the Kemalist revolutionary reforms in general aimed at ending this dualistic order by the establishment of a dualistically monistic one. As İnönü argued in his memoirs, “the two-headed system could not go on forever. It nourished the expectation that the sovereign would return under the guise of the caliph ... and gave hope to the [Ottoman dynasty]”²³⁶. Kemalism and Roman *vahdet-i vücud* are totally

²³⁴ Professor Şemsettin Günaltay was among the key writers of the CUP-financed journal *İslâm Mecmuası* (as we have seen in Chapter 4, an essentially *vahdet-i vücud*-related publication).

²³⁵ Bil 1999, 135-136.

²³⁶ Quoted in Mango 1999, 403.

commensurable in their 'politico-'ideological' dualistic monism. As Atatürk himself wrote in his notes for the CHP Congress (1937): "The form (*şekil*) of governance of the Turkish nation is based on the fundamental principle 'Power is one' ('*Kuvvet birdir*'). Sovereignty (*egemenlik*) is one; and belongs unrestrictedly and unconditionally to the nation"²³⁷. In his relevant religio- political work on government, which was essentially a *tasavvufi* commentary on Aristotle, Ibn Arabi stated: "Yet it is known that the Lord wanted to delegate the government of the human kingdom to one single entity. The example of it has been given in the person of our Master, [Muhammad], may God's peace and blessings be upon him, who has also declared: 'If, in a single nation, men swear allegiance to two rulers, eliminate one of them'"²³⁸.

Together with it representing a totally erroneous understanding of Islam, the Kemalists considered the institution of the Caliphate a political liability for the *laik*-ising Turkish state. On the one hand, when the institution was under the control of the occupying Western powers, it effectively constituted a religio-political pole which could not be reconciled with the Kemalist core principle of national independence. Indeed, the abolition of the Caliphate and the other two laws which gave shape to *laiklik* were intrinsically related to that latter principle. As Earle argues, "by a series of drastic decrees issued within less than a week, therefore, the Grand National Assembly ... had done away with all those Muslim prerogatives which formerly had constituted one of the principal reasons for the maintenance of the Capitulations and for the specific immunities under which the Christian populations of the Empire had lived"²³⁹. In other words, we see that *laiklik* as socially enacted intellect and intellect-represented social is inseparably related to the other principles of Kemalism in a differentiated unity. Characteristically, the Minister of Justice, Seyit Bey, was arguing that those who wanted to use the Caliphate to buy influence in the Islamic world were deceiving both themselves and the Muslims as a whole: "Be sure that [the Caliphate] cannot influence the Muslim world at all... The armies which invaded Syria, Iraq and the city, which was called the capital of the Caliphate, Istanbul, were made up of Indian Muslims"²⁴⁰. Although in the transitional period from the Empire to the Republic the title of the Caliph

²³⁷ In Atatürk's handwriting, in Perinçek 1999, 243.

²³⁸ İbn Arabî 1997, 51.

²³⁹ Earle 1925, 86. In general, Earle's approach put him among the supporters of the *separation thesis*. He was among the early observers that Rustow described. He also nurtured liberal hopes for Turkey.

²⁴⁰ Velidedeoğlu (5/4/2004), quoting from the relevant parts of *T.B.M.M. 's Tutanak Dergisi* (*Minutes Journal*).

had a certain appeal for some Muslims - as can be gauged from the petition submitted by Muslims from India to Atatürk not to abolish the Caliphate but to assume the post himself - the fact that no one claimed the Caliphate after its abolition also shows that the Kemalists were on the whole right. When it was under Ottoman control or generally independent, the Caliphate and its related Sultanate, as Mahmud Esad Bozkurt argued, was a source of enormous hostility towards the Turkish nation from the Christian world. "Nations like England and France, which ruled over and controlled a large part of the Islamic world, were suspicious of the policy of Pan-Islamism which was followed by the Caliphate, and they followed their policy of separatism and breaking up the Ottoman Empire. Even Christian states which did not have Muslim subjects perceived us within an Islam-Christianity duality and, in this manner, [a] terrible propaganda [campaign] was conducted against Turkism [i.e., the Turkish nation] in the entire Christian world, and especially among our own Christian subjects. The question of Crusaders (*Haçlılar*) and Islamic Fighters (*Aylılar*) was continuing in the 20th century"²⁴¹.

The Kemalists rejected the merely instrumental arguments centred on the premise that the Caliphate could be a source of influence for Turkey in the Islamic world. According to Atatürk: "Those who direct their efforts towards continuing the deception of the Muslim people, putting them in fear of 'the Caliphate', are nothing but enemies of the Muslims and especially of Turkey. To be caught up in that game can be nothing but a sign of ignorance and carelessness"²⁴². In other words, *the principle of laikik, in its re-establishment of the real and authentic meaning of Islam, constituted a prototype for the whole Islamic world and its various nations*. The abolition of the Caliphate signalled the Republic's acceptance of the new international order in the Gökalpian 'international civilization-national culture' schema. This involved the rejection of the old international Islamic political framework but not Islam per se. This modern international order had to be matched by relevant aspects of the national religious culture. While institutional expression of the national religious culture, which for the Kemalists meant the Directorate of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Reisliği, DİR*), established in 1924, its content was Roman Turkish-language-based *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf*.

²⁴¹ Bozkurt 2003/1940, 216.

²⁴² Velidedeoğlu (5/4/2004), quoting from the relevant parts of *T.B.M.M.'s Tutanak Dergisi* (Minutes Journal).

Modern Turkish Romanisation of Western Legalism and the Şeriat

The Kemalist revolutionary measures in the field of law gave form to another part of the national *laik* public space. On April 8, 1924, the courts that still applied the *şeriat* in matters of personal status – inheritance, marriage, divorce - were closed down. On April 20, 1924, the first Constitution of the Republic was proclaimed. Islam was retained as the official religion, as well as “the formula, used in the 1921 law of fundamental organization, enjoining on the Assembly the duty to give effect to the provisions of the *şeriat*”²⁴³. In his famous 1927 speech (*Nutuk*), Atatürk described that retention as one among the harmless transient concessions the Republic had been able to make at that early time and said that “this excess” (“*bu fazlalık*”) would be removed at the first opportune moment²⁴⁴. In a 1928 amendment to the Constitution, the above-mentioned articles were dropped altogether. From the promulgation of the 1924 Constitution followed a series of legal changes in accordance with the CHP’s principle of *laik* government. In 1926, “[t]he civil code, the code of obligations, the civil procedure, the bankruptcy law, and other measures relating to individual rights were borrowed from Switzerland; the commercial code was transplanted from the French, German and Swiss commercial codes; the penal code was taken from Italy. All these were adapted in an attempt to adopt them to local requirements”²⁴⁵. Of these, the civil code had the greatest impact on Turkish life.

Davison’s analysis of the adoption of the Swiss Civil Code has clearly shown that the rationale behind it was the need to separate the affairs of the world and religion²⁴⁶. While Davison rightly identifies the separation dimension which is discernible from their various utterances, he fails to detect that in reality the Kemalists were acting within the *sinallilistic* framework of the Gökalpian *vahdet-i vücud*-derived dualistic monism. In her insightful analysis of the Turkish Civil Code, *The Ottoman and Islamic Substratum of Turkey’s Civil Code*, Miller reveals that the Turkish Civil Code was a hierarchical monistic “Turkish/Ottoman/Swiss/Islamic composite”²⁴⁷ based on the Swiss Civil Code and the pre-existing Ottoman legal realities. There was a conscious “desire on the part of the translating committee to leave the daily functioning of civil life strictly alone while at

²⁴³ Mango 1999, 407.

²⁴⁴ Mahmut 1929-30, 89-90.

²⁴⁵ Versan 1984, 249.

²⁴⁶ Davison 1998, 166-173.

²⁴⁷ Miller 2000, 354.

the same time radically altering the abstract structure under which this daily functioning took place”²⁴⁸. In other words, this was the creation of the overall ‘worldly’ space which provided the overall meaning to the Turkish newly forming national identity (the Gökaltın ‘civilization’ ideal, while at the same time leaving the previous mode of life largely alone (the Gökaltın ‘cultural’ ideal). The newly Turkish national ideal which acted as a *barzah* between the two was generated in its uniqueness out of their inter-encapsulation:

with the advent of the Civil Code, in other words, Turkish society as a whole did in fact cease to be as it had been under the Ottoman Empire. At the same time, however, the daily process and procedures of society, the life that the population led, remained, by virtue of the same Code – by virtue of loopholes and loose phrasing, the shift in emphasis and changes in authority – almost exactly the same as it had been before²⁴⁹.

And this follows fully the Roman law of correlation of ‘both ... and ...’. It is not accidental that the Turkish Code was “a remarkable success”²⁵⁰.

The Turkish Romanisation of modern Civilisational Secular Imports and the Discarding of Old Religious Identifiers

Although state policies portrayed drinking as injurious both socially and personally for health and also religious reasons²⁵¹, on April 9, 1924 the late Ottoman religiously prescribed total ban on alcohol was lifted, allowing the pre-existing Ottoman and Turkish tradition to be established²⁵². On December 26, 1925, the Assembly adopted the use of the 24-hour day and the internationally used common dating system. The first replaced the Muslim sunrise-based day cycle used to regulate the compulsory five daily prayers (with Sunday replacing Friday as the weekly holiday), while the second ‘completed’ the adoption of the Gregorian calendar – introduced earlier by the Young Turks – by discarding the year of the Prophet’s *hijra* (migration to Medina) as the starting year of the calendar. Sartorial reform had by far the greatest impact on the Muslim heart and psyche, especially since it directly challenged parts of the predominant popular *vahdet-i vücud* Islam.

²⁴⁸ Miller 2000, 358.

²⁴⁹ Miller 2000, 360.

²⁵⁰ Miller 2000, 335-336.

²⁵¹ Usta 2005, 175 -179 (*Hutbe* 39), and Gölpinarlı 2007/1927, 102-105.

²⁵² On the Ottoman and Turkish drinking tradition see Bozkurt 2006 and Sülker 1985.

“Dress, and especially headgear, was the visible and outward token by which a Muslim indicated his allegiance to the community of Islam and *his rejection of others* [*sic. vis-à-vis the emphasized part*]”²⁵³. During Ottoman times, it was officially indicative of sex, religion, social status and rank, even profession. On November 25, 1925, a previous decree was converted to law, declaring the European hat as “the common headgear of the Turkish people” and forbidding any other type of headgear, including the fez. For religious conservatives and certain Islamists, the measure amounted to a full assault on the Islamic faith – something which portrays an exclusively exoteric and interest-related understanding of religion. There were hat riots in a number of places, dealt with by the Ankara Independence Tribunal. Of the 138 death sentences that the latter pronounced between March 1925 and March 1926 - a period of *Nakşibendiyye*-led rebellions - twenty or so can be attributed directly to the hat riots²⁵⁴. Other enforced sartorial measures of that time were regulations concerning the dress of civil servants, the wearing of hats and tails on ceremonial occasions, and allowing turbans and robes to be worn only by official Islamic functionaries²⁵⁵. The veil was not officially banned, but it was frowned upon by the state as a bad custom. Women were granted the right to vote in the municipal elections in 1930 and in the national ones in 1934. They were also granted the right to be elected to parliament. In the parliament following the elections of January 1935, there were 18 women in a total of 399 MPs²⁵⁶. Moreover, surnames became compulsory in 1934.

The Christian mosaics on the walls of the Ayasofya Mosque had been plastered over in the late Ottoman period. True to his *Şems* (Bektashi/Alevi) Mevlevi and Melami principles, the President of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk first had this destructive plaster removed in 1932²⁵⁷ and then in 1935 officially ‘donated’ Aya Sofya on behalf of the Turkish nation to global Humanity as a museum – incurring in the process the wrath

²⁵³ Lewis 1961, 261-2.

²⁵⁴ Mango 1999, 436. The Ankara Independence Tribunal was established, together with that of Diyarbakır, on 4 March 1925, the day of the enactment of the “Maintenance of Order Law” (*Takrir-i Sükûn Kanunu*). The National Assembly (*T.B.M.M.*) approved both measures on the request of the government. They came into being as a response to the *Şeyh* Sait Kurdish nationalist-Islamic rebellion. Appeal against death sentences pronounced by these tribunals was not allowed. Similar tribunals had been in operation during the “War of Independence” to deal with acts of treason, desertion, etc.

²⁵⁵ Mango 1937, 435.

²⁵⁶ Kitsikis 1998, 388-389.

²⁵⁷ On the issue of Atatürk and Ayasofya, see Kılıçkaya 2004.

of the non-Roman Islamists. It was during this period (1934) that Venizelos put forward Atatürk's nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize²⁵⁸.

Secular and Religious Education

Education was among the cornerstones of the Kemalist reforms. It was seen as an instrument for shaping the national character as well as to instill reason in society. In 1921 Atatürk declared:

I firmly believe that our traditional educational methods have been the most important factor in the history of national decline. When I speak of national education, I mean an education that will be free from all traditional superstitions as well as from foreign influences, *Eastern or Western*, that are incompatible with our national character²⁵⁹.

The national morality, Atatürk said, addressing a teachers' convention in 1925, "had to be nurtured and supported by civil principles and free thought"²⁶⁰. "The Law for the Unification of Instruction [*Tevhid-i Tedrisat 1924*] was a fundamental step in the establishment of a unified, modern, secular, egalitarian, and national educational system. Its nation-building role was especially vital in a country where identity was often Islamic rather than national, and which was fragmented into numerous regional, tribal, racial and linguistic units"²⁶¹. In the Ottoman Empire, the *raison d'être* of education for the Muslim *millet* was above all religion. The *ilmiye*, the institution of Islamic knowledge, was staffed entirely by the *ulema*. From the end of the eighteenth century until the Unification Law was passed, education was organized gradually on a dichotomous basis between religious and non-religious schools for various purposes and audiences. İnönü, addressing a Teachers' Union meeting, declared:

We already knew that opinions would be advanced that certain institutions should have been reformed rather than closed by the Unification of Instruction Law, and we had also predicted the results of this kind of objection. The Great Assembly, however, has now decided. ... We believe that the initiative has nothing to do with being irreligious. The purest and the most authentic form of Islam has been manifested among us ... You teachers! You will give a *national* type of education, *neither a religious nor an international one*. We will witness that *religious training is not an attack*

²⁵⁸ Kılıçkaya 2004, 46.

²⁵⁹ Berkes 1964, 476-7.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁶¹ Winter 1984, 186.

*on the national, and that both types of education will be performed in their own modes*²⁶².

The new Law placed all educational institutions under the control of the Ministry, and soon the *medreses* – 478 in total – were abolished. Because religion remained – and so the need to make it somehow compatible with the CHP vision - Article 4 of the Law provided for the opening of *separate schools* (“*ayrı mektebler*”) for the education of personnel that would perform the religious functions of prayer leading and preaching²⁶³. The duration of the studies was 4 years²⁶⁴. Initially, 29 “*İmam-Hatip Mektepleri*” were opened²⁶⁵. In September 1924 there were 26 such schools with 302 teachers and 1,442 students²⁶⁶. “Their principals had no special religious training; they were experienced educators, imbued with the goal of turning out enlightened men of religion who would be loyal to the Republic. Most teaching hours were devoted to science and French, with religious subjects such as Koran and *Hadith* relegated to secondary position. Arabic was not taught at all. This strange curriculum did not attract many students; in any case, the prevailing anti-religious [*sic*] atmosphere would not have encouraged the institutes to develop”²⁶⁷. In 1925-1926, there were 20 of these schools²⁶⁸. In 1926-1927, their number was drastically reduced to 2, with 41 teachers and 278 students²⁶⁹. Finally, the last two were closed down in 1931²⁷⁰. It proved impossible for these schools to be kept operational in the political climate of the time. Those students that continued their education in the *İmam-Hatip Mektepleri* from the *medreses* faced a dim future resulting from loss of status²⁷¹ vis-à-vis the state. The final indirect blow came in 1928 with the decision to abandon the Arabic script²⁷². The same Article 4 included a provision for the establishment of a Faculty of Theology in the University of Istanbul – saving in that way the *medrese* of the *Süleymaniye* Mosque in Istanbul. The faculty, however, suffered a rather similar obliterating fate due to lack of student attendance. Having been

²⁶² Pacacı 1999, 393.

²⁶³ Nomer 1996, 311-12.

²⁶⁴ Kaya 1998, 158.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁶ Allen 1968, 182-3.

²⁶⁷ Winter 1984, 188.

²⁶⁸ Kaya 1998, 158.

²⁶⁹ Allen 1968, 183.

²⁷⁰ Rustow 1957, 83.

²⁷¹ Kaya 1998, 159. Kaya is quoting Ergin, Osman 1977, *Türkiye Maarif Tarihi*, C. V., İstanbul, 2125.

²⁷² *Ibid.*

reduced to an Institute for Islamic Research within the Faculty of Letters in 1933, it was closed down altogether in 1941²⁷³.

Further on the point of religious education, a number of courses operating outside the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and under the control of the Presidency of Religious Affairs were to be found from 1925. These courses, known as *Hafız ve Kuran Kursları*²⁷⁴, provided training in the memorizing of the Holy Book. They took place in metropolitan mosques or special schools. There were 10 such courses, with an average of 35 students, operating from their beginning in 1925 until 1931. Around that time the Ministry of Education attempted to attach these courses to itself, but the President of the *Diyanet İşleri Reisliği*, Rifat Börekçi (president from 1924 to 1941), managed to retain them in his organization as professional schools (*meslek okulları*)²⁷⁵. In 1932-1933 there were 9 of these courses with 9 teachers and 232 male students. Their numbers followed a slow but steady upward trend throughout the Kemalist and post-Kemalist period, especially since they partially covered for the defunct *İmam-Hatib Okulları* after 1931. There were 19 such courses with 11 teachers and 256 students (231 males and 25 females) in 1934-5; 15 in 1935-6 with 14 teachers and 393 students (358 males and 35 females); and 16 in 1936-7 with 14 teachers and 409 students (372 males and 37 females)²⁷⁶. It goes without saying that a degree of illegal private religious instruction by the *hocas* (Muslim teacher) remained, especially in the provinces.

As far as lay education was concerned, religious input was gradually phased out. The process reflected CHP's consolidation of control over the state – completed to all intents and purposes in 1928. "When the clause stating that Islam was the state religion was dropped from the Constitution in 1928, the Ministry of Education took steps to drop classes in religion from school curricula. (Already the old books on morality, ritual, etc. had been replaced by lesson books suited to the ages and understanding of the students, and the teaching of lessons in religion had been assigned to the regular schoolteachers.) Classes in religion were dropped in urban schools in 1930; the change was effected in the village schools in 1933"²⁷⁷. "From 1929 until 1949 there was no formal required, public religious teaching in the regular state elementary, middle, and secondary schools, so children learned ritual at home or not at all. Optional courses in 'religion' were available until 1935 and were 'recommended' courses by the Ministry of

²⁷³ Rustow 1957, 83.

²⁷⁴ Reed 1957, 122.

²⁷⁵ Kaya 1998, 159.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁷ Berkes 1957, 477.

Education ... Many were not taught their formal prayers”²⁷⁸. In 1931 attendance in secular elementary education was made compulsory. In 1933 a law stipulating the jurisdiction and duties of the Ministry of Education re-affirmed the principle of secular education and abolished earlier requirements for the provision of religious instruction in schools. The educational ideology “in primary schools impugned the *‘ulema* for the decline of the Ottoman Empire. In the new schools, they were described as ignorant and reactionary fanatics who had exploited the Turkish people”²⁷⁹.

Another measure related to education was the 1928 adoption of the Latin script in place of the Arabic one. As Öndin states, Gökalp’s scheme of ‘civilization-culture’ supports the adoption of the Latin alphabet, which it sees as part of the international civilisation²⁸⁰ – and as such sharable among the various nations who had adopted it. Mainstream Anglophone literature usually overstates the supposedly negative effects of this revolutionary measure, especially vis-à-vis the Ottoman past. For example, Ahmad writes that “at a stroke even the literate people were cut off from their past”²⁸¹. As far as the vast majority of the population was concerned, the Ottoman past vis-à-vis education did not have much relevance, since the percentage of literate Turks around 1922 was less than 4%, rising to 10.6% in 1927. The simplification of the alphabet was also designed to “bring literacy within the grasp of the masses”²⁸². In 1935, only seven years after the alphabet reform, the literacy rate reached 19.2%.

On July 12, 1932, the *Society for Research on the Turkish Language* (*Türk Dili Tetkik Cemiyeti*) – later known as *Turkish Language Association* (*Türk Dil Kurumu*) – was founded on the initiative of Atatürk. Its founders were Samih Rifat (President), Ruşen Eşref Ünaydın (Bektashi²⁸³), Celâl Sahir Erozan and Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu (Bektashi²⁸⁴), all prominent literature authors and MPs. Purging the lexicon of Arabic and Persian loanwords was included in its tasks. Out of a research deficit tainted by an Orientalist pro-Arabic/pro-Persian bias, Western literature portrays the language reforms as essentially nationalist and anti-religious: “[t]he alphabet reform of 1928 has barred most Turks who today [1957] are under thirty-five from access to their literary heritage of Ottoman days, and hence

²⁷⁸ Reed 1957, 122.

²⁷⁹ Mardin 1989, 155.

²⁸⁰ Öndin 2003, 62.

²⁸¹ Ahmad 1993, 80.

²⁸² Robinson 1963, 86.

²⁸³ Şener 1994, 73.

²⁸⁴ Noyan (Dedebaba) 2003, 204-206.

too much of their religious traditions”²⁸⁵, or else, “[t]he leadership wanted to cut the youth off from traditional literature, which was overwhelmingly religious, and force the new Turks to read the national literature of history, science and technology”²⁸⁶. Indeed, this was rather clear even before the 1928 alphabet reform. Portraying the nature and the future religious direction of the Kemalist Republic, the official *Telif ve Tercüme Heyeti* (Compilation and Translation Committee) (Jan 14, 1925) included among the various works set for publication those of four main Muslim masters, namely, the Aristotelians Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), İbn Rüşd (Averroes), and, importantly, the *Şeyh al-Akbar*, Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi²⁸⁷. Ibn Arabi states on the issue of language:

Just as this is so... That is: just as God the Exalted One has two envoys ... So that which willed the human structure, which is the Spirit ... This Spirit has two envoys too. ... One is exoteric and one esoteric. The esoteric envoy of the Spirit in the human being is the will, while the exoteric one is language. The will is at the rank of [the Archangel] Gabriel. It transmits his revelation to language. As for language, it is an interpreter and translator of the will. Just as, [in the passage] above, the will is shown to belong to the station of [the Archangel] Gabriel, so language can be shown as an example of the position of our Prophet (pbuh)²⁸⁸.

Similarly, for the Kemalists, language pertained both to the national but, at the same time, to the religious as such. In Kemalism, language is not only the key dimension of the modern overall worldly national but also it penetrates and serves as its unifier with the religious. And the religious was largely identified with Roman *tasavvuf*. This, as we shall see, was the basis of the Kemalist project of ‘Islam as the Turkish national religion’ in which, as we will see, along with other various other Kemalist utterances and policies, although it cannot be the dominant determinant of it, religion constitutes a differentiated category within the Kemalist nationalism. Indeed, in the Kemalist conception, being Muslim constituted a necessary yet not a sufficient condition of true Turkishness.

Discussing the relation between Kemalism and German National Socialism (Nazism), Mahmut Esad Bozkurt states:

Although both the Turkish and the German regimes are nationalist, there is a thin distinction between them. As far as nationalism is concerned, the

²⁸⁵ Rustow 1957, 85.

²⁸⁶ Robinson 1963, 85-6.

²⁸⁷ Kayaoğlu 1998, 242.

²⁸⁸ Ibn Arabi 2000, 75-76.

German regime is racist. As for the Turkish regime, it is not racist. It emphasizes not so much race, but culture and language. Moreover, Atatürk said in his Great *Nutuk* 'Do not believe in others than those who carry your blood'. Yet this recommendation in practice manifested the union based on culture and language²⁸⁹.

This peculiar Kemalist identification of the notion of 'blood', above all, with the spiritual/intelligible and the non-material is not to be found in any of the definitions of modern nationalism. On the contrary, this identification is ever present both in Roman Christianity as 'the Blood of the *Logos* Christ' as well as in *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* as the Muhammadan Reality/*Logos*, especially in Bektashism. Most interestingly, as Çağaptay shows, for Kemalists "race referred not to a biological community, but to a national one. True, in the minds of the Kemalists, this was an immutable concept. However, it was defined through language and not genetic factors"²⁹⁰. Not only the *Logos* (the Word) 'is' Language but it is immutable too! For Atatürk, "a nation is a fruitful moral/spiritual element coming out of the depths of history, and a moral/spiritual family"²⁹¹. As Oran states, "the definition of Kemalist nationalism was not based on the criterion of coming from the Turkish race but upon the criterion of considering oneself Turkish"²⁹².

The Kemalist inter-encapsulating triad nation-language-religion is clear from Atatürk's appreciation of the 'religious-national' worthiness of Mevlana's son, Sultan Veled (the founder of the *Şems* (Bektashi/Alevi) branch of the *Mevleviyye*). Atatürk personally accepted the religious greatness of Rumi and his intrinsic relation to the Turkish understanding of Islam. In a discussion as to why Hasan Ali Yücel attempted to hide his Mevlevism, Atatürk reportedly stated:

but I too accept Mevlana. ... *Mevlana was a great reformer, who adapted Islam to the Turkish soul. In reality, Islam is a tolerant (hoşgörülü) and modern religion* As for Mevlevism, it is an example of the total penetration of the Turkish tradition into Islam. Mevlana was a great reformer. The idea of coming close to God by turning around while standing up and being in motion is an example of the Turkish genius²⁹³.

²⁸⁹ Bozkurt 2003/1940, 193.

²⁹⁰ Çağaptay 2004, 97.

²⁹¹ Atatürk's Notes on 'Nation' and 'The Principle of Nationalisms' (in Borak 1998, 381).

²⁹² Oran 1988, 132.

²⁹³ Hafız Yaşar Okuyan, in Borak 2002, 100-101.

Yet when during the same discussion the conversation centred on the person of Sultan Veled, Atatürk stated:

It is said that during the funeral of Sultan Veled the coffin of Mevlana stood up. What does this mean? (*This subject was discussed for more than half an hour.* Many struggled to find the answer. But nobody could give the answer that Atatürk expected. In the end, Atatürk asked the following:;) Who was the greater reformer, Mevlana or Sultan Veled? (All present united around the opinion that it was Mevlana. Atatürk continued:;) Ok, who was the greater literary genius, Mevlana or Sultan Veled? (Again all present said that it was Mevlana, and parts of his *Mesnevî* were read. In that manner, Mevlana's literary genius was praised". Atatürk continued:;) Mevlana was the father. Why did he stand up in the presence of his son? and in that manner to acknowledge that his son was greater than himself? (There was no answer. And Atatürk stated:;) We are thinking very simplistically. What caused Mevlana's coffin to rise up was the Turkish genius. Mevlana wrote his *Mesnevî* in Persian. This shows that he did not consider the Turkish language as sufficient for producing a literary work. But Sultan Veled in his works used the Turkish language, with the most beautiful methods of expression. Although he was less an artist, he was more Turkish than his father. Gentlemen, this legend is only a reaction of the Turkish genius against Mevlana's writing *The Mesnevî* in Persian. It was the apology of the genius of Mevlana to the Turkish language²⁹⁴.

One of Atatürk's 'own', the *Şems*-branch Mevlevi, Veled Çelebi (İzbudak) contributed to Republican linguistic policies by trying to develop a Turkish common idiom that would unite Anatolian Turkish with the Turkish dialects of Central Asia. Moreover, as Birge states, "in the previous years [i.e., those preceding 1937], every book on Turkish literature written for usage in the [national] schools was emphasizing 'the Bektashi Literature' for each past century, because there is neither another form of writing which reflects the point of view of the Turkish national traditions nor one which uses the variations of Turkish literature written in Turkish so much"²⁹⁵. For example, in 1930 the Ministry of Education published a book for the third class of high school (*lise*) written by Mustafa Nihat, which included a special section on Bektashi poetry¹⁰⁷⁸²⁹⁶. Among the poems was one composed by the famous Bektashi poet Edib Harabi, which ran:

O hypocrite, do not ask about black on white,

²⁹⁴ Egeli 1959, 71-2.

²⁹⁵ Birge 1991/1937, 14.

²⁹⁶ Koca 2003, 12.

We have had lessons from God, we are formidable scholars, God is [our] witness, you are ignorant and a mischief maker, Our judgements are right, we are fair judges.

We do not take into account the words ‘There is no god [but God]’, We never plunge into the sea of error,

We do not perform the *namaz* five times like you, Yet we are constantly worshipping God.

Do not think that we have not experienced a journey to heaven, We have such a journey; we are not in need,

Nor are we hungry in the daytime in Ramazan, Our bellies are full, yet we are always fasting.

Harabi is not separate from God, God [too] is not other than Harabi,

Don’t speak, Harabi, this is not the moment,

We are always steadfast in your [God’s] word²⁹⁷.

In other words, the *batini* (esoteric) Bektashi poetry was taught as part of the national curriculum long after the closure of the *tekkes* and during the period of the development of the state-led policy of ‘Islam as a national religion’. In addition, the Ministry of Education in 1930 published 3000 copies of an anthology of 180 Bektashi poets and their biographies under the title *Bektashi Poets*²⁹⁸.

A close look at the chronology of the abolition of religious education in the elementary schools (1930-1935) reveals a correlation with the gradual enactment of the holistic Kemalist official policy of ‘Islam as the Turkish national religion’- which we shall examine later in our discussion. As long as it lasted, religious education in the Kemalist schools was based on a Roman Turkish *tasavvufi* religious understanding. For example, the official Cumhuriyet *Çocuğunun Din Dersleri* (Religious Lessons for the Children of the Republic) was written by Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, a known member of the *Mevleviyye* (who knew from his own experience that its *Şems* (Bektashi/Alevi) branch predominated within it²⁹⁹). We need to be reminded here that Gölpınarlı calls “*vahdet-i vücud* the essence of *tasavvuf*”³⁰⁰. This book was essentially a metadoxical Roman Turkish *tasavvufi* guide for children in a national framework³⁰¹. In other words, we see that the Turks

²⁹⁷ Koca & Gümüsoğlu 2003, 12-3.

²⁹⁸ Birge 1991/1937, 14.

²⁹⁹ See Gölpınarlı 1953 (various places).

³⁰⁰ Gölpınarlı 1992/1931, 261.

³⁰¹ For example, “God exists in everything but is not a thing” (p. 38); “Our delimited intellect cannot comprehend God, who is in every place, in everything, and in our heart” (p. 38); “Allah has no [specific] place of residence, He has no house. He is in

every place. Every force is He, every power is His, it is his force. He is together with us” (p. 84); “the affairs of the world are governed by laws established for the administration of the state. Human transactions and behaviour are related to these laws. They have no relation to religion [as such]. In human transactions the ruler is the intellect and scientific knowledge. Islam accepts the sovereignty of the intellect and scientific knowledge in the affairs of the world” (p. 83); “there is no intermediary between God and the believer in Islam. ...because according to religion all Muslims are equal” (p. 83); “However, us [do you mean “you”?] yourselves know religion is a matter of the heart/conscience”. “You know children, there are the priests of the Christians and if there is no priest they cannot perform their prayers [note: here, in reality, he castigates Papist Christianity, which also controlled large parts of the ‘Byzantine’ elite during the early Selçuk and Ottoman formative periods]. However, a Muslim can perform the *namaz* as he likes in his/her house, in the mosque. You understand that there is no special religious class [as an intermediate between God and the believer] in Islam. In Islam all are equal. ... [Islam] do not pay attention to whether one is great or not. In essence, it is the same from the point of view of humanness/humanity in which there is no great or small [i.e., no discrimination] among all those who work hard for their living Children, you see that Islam is the path of humanity” (p. 92), “There is no stopping place and a house for God. He is in our hearts and his power in all nature he is with us. Our ancestors who understood this truth said that ‘nobody can come between God and the believer’. How correct... However, in the period before the establishment of the Republic who called themselves ‘*şeyhs*’ did not reveal this truth to the nation” (p. 94), “The Turks are the most independent and powerful among the Muslim nations. ... Because the Turks harmonized with and related themselves to civilization. [And] they accepted and declared the Republic which is government in a civilized manner. The Turks understood that God does not accept dried-out [types] prayers. ... Our enemies thought that they had killed the Turk, but the Turk showed that he/she was resurrected; God’s command was fulfilled and the Turk saved his/her independence” (pp. 99 -100), “Each nation addresses God in its own language [otherwise the believer becomes a parrot which does not understand what he/she says to God]” (p. 101), “Islam is not a religion of division, it is a communal religion” (p. 14), “What is religion?” ... [According to the Prophet] ‘the beauty of God’” (p. 23), “Religion is good character traits” (p.37), “The belief in Islam, religion and nation binds us [Turks] together” (p. 25 – this is Gokalpian), “A religion without a country cannot be” (p. 31), “The highest worship to God is to love Him, to be a human being of good character traits, to be beneficial to our nation, our *patrie*, our government, and also to all human beings. Otherwise, neither *namaz* nor fasting brings any blessing to one’s self” (p. 41), “When a human being does his/her duty, when he/she performs an act of goodness, his conscience relaxes and gets marry, and his heart delights” (p. 41), “Do not judge other people” (p. 48), “Freedom of thought belongs to everybody” (p. 48), “A Muslim do not interfere in anyone’s free thinking and beliefs” (p. 64), “Our Prophet was not like that. He was clean and wore white cloth many times, and also a light headgear. You have read also that he wore the cloth and headgear that the Byzantine Empire had sent to him [as a present]” (p. 68 and p. 73).

are a great nation because via the Republic, on the one hand, they belong to the universal civilization of humanity, and on the other, their religion represents the highest form of Islam, i.e., the application of the 'modernization- nationalisation-Islamisation' idea. Salmoni's study, *Islam in the Turkish Pedagogic Attitudes and Education Materials: 1923 -1950*, clearly shows that the co-relation of nationalism and Islam continued through the Turkish history books even after the abolition of religious education in the Republic's schools. However, Salmoni's approach is essentially based on 'observation from afar', which has the result of disassociating the observed actions of the Kemalists from their own intellectual-religious framework and re-interpreting them according to the instrumental-rational and power-based principles of the neo-Frankish epistemology of the Enlightenment. Indeed, he ends up almost identifying the Kemalist national-religious co-relation with the racist-Islamist 'Turkish-Islamic Synthesis'³⁰² movement, which, in reality, gradually developed in the 1940s during the regime of İnönü. It was a movement the early emanations of which the Kemalist Republic actively and largely suppressed. Nevertheless, to his credit, Salmoni, who aptly identifies the dynamic nature of *laiklik* and the constant presence of Islam within it, acknowledges the specificity of his approach as far as the overall issue of *laiklik* is concerned:

While the present paper approaches the matter through educational curricula, it is hoped that others will probe further, in order to produce an adequate definition of laicism which takes into account the evolving attitudes among Turkey's political and intellectual leadership, as well as its interpretation in the daily lives of ordinary [*sic.*] Turkish citizens³⁰³.

Hilmi Ziya Ülken's *Türk Tefekkürü Tarihi* [*The History of Turkish Thought*] (1932-1933) relates post-Central-Asian Turkish religious-intellectual history essentially to (the Aristotelians) Farabi and Ibn Sina, and *tasavvuf*, which he categorizes in two types, one connected to Ibn Arabi and his stepson, Konevi (the *Mağrip Mektebi*), and one to Necmeddin Kübra and Mevlana Celaeddin Rumi (the *Maşrik Mektebi*). He sees all the Ottoman *tarikats*, including the pre-19th-century *Nakşibendiyye*, as basically related to these two *tasavvuf* schools. According to Ülken, in the 19th century the *Nakşibendiyye*, which spread among the higher levels of the Ottoman politico-military-religious establishment, turned into an Islamist *tarikat*³⁰⁴. The book "attracted Atatürk's attention who invited Ülken to the

³⁰² Salmoni 2000, 59.

³⁰³ Salmoni 2000, 59.

³⁰⁴ Ülken 1999/1932-3, 320.

Presidential Palace. Following that meeting, Atatürk [officially] sent him to Germany on behalf of the Ministry of National Education. Upon his return, Atatürk said ‘Let us start a course on the *History of Turkish Thought* in the future University of Istanbul’ and he was appointed as an Assistant Professor in the *History of Turkish Thought* in the Faculty of Literature, and in 1936 he became a member of the *History of Social Doctrines* [academic school]”³⁰⁵. In 1935 he published *Türk Mistizminin Tetkikine Giriş* [*Introduction to the Study of Turkish Mysticism*]³⁰⁶. According to Noyan (Dedebaba), who had met with him, Ülken had entered the *Bektaşîyye* via Baha Sait (Baba Sait Bey)³⁰⁷. It is indicative to note that it was only after 1926, in the free national-religious atmosphere of the Kemalist Republic, that Baha Sait was able to publish his research on the Anatolian Alevi, which had been conducted under the auspices of CUP in the 1910s. Before that, his research had been met with the slogan “Now the atheists are spreading even *kızılbaş* (Alevi) propaganda”³⁰⁸ from Turkish Islamist-racists. Baha Sait passed his unpublished research notes on to Ülken³⁰⁹. Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı’s *Melâmîlik ve Melâmîler* [*Melamism and the Melamis*] was officially published by the State Printing Press (*Devlet Matbaası*) in 1931.

The abolition of religious classes in the Republic’s possessed two interrelated dimensions. The first dimension highlights the entrenchment of the separation between the worldly and the religious, and also, the removal of autonomous and purely religious identifiers from the worldly educational space. The second dimension is that religious education was essentially left to the family. As we have seen, in Roman Turkish Islam, the religious occupies both the private and the public space. In the Kemalist conception, one of the two most central *social* institutions for moral education is the family – the other being the state.

The family is the smallest institution which was born under the moral and social order of the social body of humankind. ... Besides being a life-long friendship, the family is an honor-based partnership. The most important duty of the family is the education of the children. In this duty, which is partly related to society, the family has a great share. ... [The family] is the fundamental institution for social education for the children who witness the

³⁰⁵ Ülken 2003, 16.

³⁰⁶ Ülken 2003, 21.

³⁰⁷ Noyan (Dedebaba) 2003, 337.

³⁰⁸ Birdoğan 1995b., 11.

³⁰⁹ Birdoğan 1995b., 11, and Noyan (Dedebaba) 2003, 337.

reciprocal love, respect and feelings of solidarity (*bağlılık*) of their parents³¹⁰.

In line with Gökalp³¹¹, the Kemalists consider the family (not the state) which constitutes the primary institution for religious education. It is important to note the total antithesis with the Islamist policy of Abdülhamid II, which castigated the Turkish family as basically ignorant and ostracized it from the moral and religious education (which brought under the absolute control of the pro-Islamist Ottoman state)³¹². This Gökalpian-Kemalist conception which represents a drive towards the people (*halkçılık*) was based on the awareness of the predominance of *vahdet-i vücud* Islam among the Anatolian Sunni and Alevi population (through the earlier CUP-sponsored research, etc). While nationalising and ‘secularizing’ the state-related educational space, the Kemalists, on the one hand, left the Turkish *tasavvuf*’s ‘*hür mezhepler*’, i.e., the Bektashis/Alevis to continue their religious family-based education and communal practices unhindered, and, on the other hand, provided (as we shall see, through state-related religious services, publications, etc.), the Sunni part of the population, which had been under the influence of non-Roman state-promoted Islamic doctrines in the late Ottoman Empire, with a heavy *vahdet-i vücud* input.

Modern Roman Islamic Re-establishment: The Separation between State and Islam by Inter-Encapsulation

In the early days of 1923, Atatürk began his journey towards İzmir, a trip which has been characterized as one which “la[id] the foundations of the *laiklik* revolution”³¹³. In his speech to the people of İzmit on 18/1/1923 he declared:

Our nation is the owner of two virtues (*fazilet*): religion and language. No power could have removed and can remove and take away these virtues from the heart (*kalp*) and conscience (*vicdan*) of our nation³¹⁴.

³¹⁰ Afetinan 1969/1931, 331.

³¹¹ Gökalp 1995b./1918, 97.

³¹² See Fortna 2002.

³¹³ Ceylan 1993, 103.

³¹⁴ *Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri* I-III 1989, Vol. II, 18/1/1923, 70-1. In a Turkish religious context, the meaning of *kalp*, *gönül* and *vicdan* are identical and can be used interchangeably [Uludağ 1999, 269]

On Feb 2, 1923 Atatürk addressed the people of Izmir in the old Customs building:

Our religion, Islam, is the most reasonable and the most natural, and it was only due to this that it became the final religion. For it to be able to be natural it must be reasonable. It must be and is in harmony with the intellect (*akıl*), intuition (*feraset*), judgement (*muhakeme*), logic (*mantık*), theoretical and technical science (*ilim ve fen*), and with all of them³¹⁵.

On Feb 7, 1923, he delivered a sermon (*hutbe*) in Turkish from the pulpit (*minber*) of the Paşa Mosque in Balıkesir. It was the first Kemalist step towards Gökalp's policy of the Turkification of sermons and worship in general so that the common people could understand Islam on their own:

Hear you, o ... nation, God is one. His glory is great. You may receive His protection, benevolence and goodness. Our Prophet became a servant and a messenger of God in order to convey the realities of religion to mankind. We all know that the fundamentals of his Law are the verses of the most glorious Koran. Our religion, which gives enlightening spirit to mankind, is the final religion. It is the most wonderful religion. This is so because our religion is in agreement and in accord (*tevafuluk ve tetabuk ediyor*) with the intellect (*akıl*), logic (*mantık*), and the truth (*hakikat*). If it had not agreed [harmonized] with the intellect, logic, and the truth, a contradiction between our religion and the other divine natural laws would necessarily have existed. This is so because it is God who makes the laws [that govern] all creation³¹⁶.

On March 16, 1923, Atatürk addressed the guilds (*esnaf*) in Adana. In the course of explaining the position of the *ulema* in the new state, he argued:

However, according to our religion, each person possesses a judgement of his/her own. You yourselves can evaluate whether something is in harmony with (*muvaflık*) with this religion. Whatever thing is in harmony with the intellect and logic, [and] with the general good (*menfaati âmme*), learn that it is in harmony with our religion too. If a thing is in harmony with the intellect and logic, [and] with the good of the nation (*milletin menfaati*), then

³¹⁵ A speech on the future of Turkey to the people of Izmir' (2/2/1923), in Borak 1998, 213. This speech is also included in *Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri* I-III 1989, Vol. II, 31/1/1923, 87-95, but with two important differences: its length, which in reality was 85 pages, is specified as only 7.5, and its date is given as 31/1/1923, instead of the correct one, which is 2/2/1923.

³¹⁶ *Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri* I-III 1989, Vol. II, Feb 7, 1923, 98.

nobody [should] ask whether it is also for the benefit of Islam. [If that is the case, it goes without saying that] this thing would be religious. If our religion had not been a religion which was in accord with the intellect [and] logic, it would not have been the most wonderful and the last religion³¹⁷.

In an interview given to the French journalist Maurice Pernot on October 29, 1923, the day of the declaration of the Republic, Atatürk declared:

The Turkish nation must become more religious, I mean it must become more religious in a manner based on complete homeliness/plainness (*bütün sadeliği ile*). I believe in this as [part of] my religion and as I personally believe in the truth (*hakikat*)³¹⁸. [Our religion] does not contain anything that opposes consciousness (*şuûr*) and hinders progress. However, ... there is also a religion [i.e., a religious understanding] ... in Turkey which is confused, artificial and made of false beliefs. But when the time comes its ignorant [representatives] will be enlightened and their weaknesses [rectified]. If they do not find the light, it will mean that they will destroy and condemn themselves. We will save them³¹⁹.

Arguing in 1930 against the intermediary role of the “class” of religious fanatics (*sofîa sınıfı*), which meant the orthopractic legal scholars and orthopractic literalist Sufis, Atatürk stated:

Religion is a necessary institution. It is impossible for irreligious nations to continue to exist. The only fact is that religion is the relation between God (*Allah*) and the mortal human being/servant (*kul*). The intermediary role of the *sofîa* class in religion must not be permitted³²⁰.

As Atatürk apparently also argued at some point:

Religion exists and it is needed. We have a religion with very strong foundations. The component parts are good, but the building was left neglected for centuries. ... Religion is a question of conscience (*vicdan*). Everyone is free to obey the command of his conscience. We show respect to religion. We are not against thought and ways of thinking. We are simply working to ensure that the affairs of religion do not mix with the affairs of

³¹⁷ Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri I-III (1989), Vol. II, (March 16, 1923), 131.

³¹⁸ Although the word *hakikat* means ‘truth’, in a religious context it clearly has *tasavvuf* connotations, denoting the mystical vision of God by a believer. Numerous *tasavvuf* word-compounds such as *hakikat-i mutlaka* (‘God’) and *hakikat ehli* (‘a mystic’) are based on it.

³¹⁹ Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri I-III 1989, Vol. III, (Oct 29, 1923), 93, emphasis ours.

³²⁰ Kılıç 2005, 564-5.

the nation and the state; we are guarding against the fanatical movements which are based on castes and action. We will never give opportunities to the reactionaries³²¹.

A number of critical conceptions are at play here. First, it is clear that Islam constituted a vital part of the Kemalist revolution. Secondly, the relation between the intellect-based worldly and heart-based Islam within the Kemalist moral order is envisaged in *sinallilistic* terms, i.e., of two separate public spaces in harmonious co-relation, i.e., inter-encapsulation. While there is a correlation between Islam and the national interest and the general good ('the public national good'), the overall order has a national character, since "for Mustafa Kemal, the real liberation of the country in the long term could only be achieved through joining contemporary civilization"³²² – which was based on national entities. In his October 29, 1923 interview with Maurice Pernot (titled "On Culture"), Atatürk stated: "The countries are various, but civilization (*medeniyet*) is one, and in order for a nation to progress it needs to participate in this single civilization"³²³. Akarsu, who rightly describes the complementary relationship between the two main elements of Kemalism as "being national (*ulusallık*)" and "being universal" (*evrensellik*), tells us that unification and catching up with contemporary civilization "is possible above all by following a direction towards the nation's own sources, language and history"³²⁴. It is clear that the Gökalpian ideal-based *vahdet-i vücud*-derived schema is totally present in Kemalism. In a sense, in the Kemalist order, the public religious ideal-good is a separate part of and partly constructs the overall public national ideal-good, while the latter guarantees the autonomy of and provides an overall normative direction to the former. While this relationship naturally entails a hierarchical power-based relation, it is above all a normative and not a genealogical (power-based) one. In the Kemalist understanding, *control emerges only contingently, since in true Islam the harmony between reason and religion is organically intrinsic*. In Kemalism, religion relates to the heart (*kalp*). As Atatürk himself wrote:

The religion which Muhammad spread caused deep vibrations in the hearts of human beings. Although he is gone, it remains the feeling that Islam brings about in the trembling hearts even after thirteen centuries³²⁵.

³²¹ From Asaf İlbbay's memoirs, in Perinçek 1999, 261.

³²² Kongar 1998.

³²³ Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri I-III 1989, Vol. III, 29/10/1923, 90-91.

³²⁴ Akarsu 1981, 3.

³²⁵ This passage survives in Atatürk's own handwriting (in Perinçek 1996, 249-51). It was published with a few minor changes in the official Kemalist history books, *Türk Tarihinin Ana Hatları* [*The Main Lines of Turkish History*] and *Tarih I* [*History I*].

Language relates to the heart and intellect of the collective national: "... the Turkish language is a sacred treasury for the Turkish nation. Because the Turkish nation sees that, in the endless unforeseen dangers that it passed through, its ethics, traditions, [collective] memories, interests, in short everything which makes its nationhood today, was protected thanks to its language. *The Turkish language is the heart (kalp) and the intellect (zihin) of the Turkish nation*"³²⁶.

It is not accidental that the Kemalist policy of Islam as the Turkish national religion, launched in the early 1930s, was founded upon Turkish-language-based *vahdet-i vücud* Islam. In fact, the most deeply *vahdet-i vücud* utterance of the Melami *Kutbul-aktap*, Atatürk, was his declaration to the people of Izmir on Feb 2, 1923:

Ladies and Gentlemen, esteemed scientists! Let us know very well that they [i.e., the Western Europeans] have researched our religion better than [we have] ourselves. We know today that among the Arabs there are those who make irreligion their profession. But for me, those who say *I am an atheist* are [in reality] undoubtedly religious. It is not possible for a human being to be an atheist. I will not burden you with this topic much more. Just let me explain why I uttered the words: *Nobody can be an atheist*³²⁷. *This generalization does not refer [specifically] to this or that religion*. Naturally, we know that the religion we have entered is the most appropriate and mature, and we have faith. But it is necessary to enlighten, cleanse and beautify our belief so that it can become really vigorous. Otherwise, our beliefs will be circumscribed by very 'weak' [religiously] persons³²⁸.

Diyanet İşleri Reisliği: The State 'Body' of the Muhammadan Reality

The establishment of the Presidency of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Reisliği, DİR*) constituted the institutional dimension of the Kemalist *sinallilia*-based *laiklik*. As we have seen, in the final years of CUP rule the various reforms under Ziya Gökalp's influence which aimed to strip the Office of the *Seyhülislâm* of its political-administrative functions set the Office on an evolutionary path towards becoming the *DİR* of the Republican period. Indeed, the *DİR* came into being at the same time as the abolition of

³²⁶ Afetinan 1969/1931, 19, emphasis ours.

³²⁷ This thesis that the human being is innately connected to God, and thus, one cannot be an atheist as such is a key theme of the lectures of the holy Elder Father Archimandrite Athanasios Mytilinaios.

³²⁸ 'A speech on the future of Turkey to the people of Izmir' Feb 2, 1923, in Borak 1998, 216-7, emphasis ours.

the Caliphate, taking the place of the abolished Ministry of Religious Affairs and Pious Foundations (*Şeri'îye ve Evkâf Vekâleti*). According to the relevant law³²⁹, the *DİR* was attached to the Office of the Prime Minister and was financially dependent on it. The President of Religious Affairs was to be appointed by the President of the Republic on the Prime Minister's recommendation. The *DİR* was designated as the highest authority for the *müftis* (jurisconsults), and charged with the administration of mosques, the appointment and dismissal of religious personnel (*imams*, *hatibs*, etc), and the preparation of the official sermons. Article 7 of the same law stipulated that “*Evkâf* affairs are provisionally placed in the keeping of the Office of the Prime Minister in the form of a Directorate-General”³³⁰. This Directorate-General, known as the Directorate-General of Pious Foundations (*Evkâf Umum Müdürlüğü*), “was responsible for the administration of *Evkâf* that had been taken over by the state, and for the maintenance of religious buildings and installations. From 1931 it also took over the payment of religious functionaries, leaving the Presidency of Religious Affairs with little more than the appointment of preachers, the censorship [*sic.*] of their sermons, and the giving of an occasional ruling on a point of Holy Law”³³¹.

It is obvious that what Kemalist *laiklik* entailed was neither institutional separation nor disestablishment; it was all about actual re-establishment of Islam. In the eyes of pro-Islamist writers, this structural formation conforms neatly to a pattern that they identify as “the Byzantine policy” (*Bizantinist tutum*)³³².

In such a society, as opposed to theocracy, the state is dominant over religion with full force. Religion is fully under the control of the forces of the state, [and] has not even gained autonomy. However much this is portrayed as religion being taken under the protection of the state, religion is obliged to institutionalize itself in a manner appropriate to the fundamental philosophy that the state adopts. In our age, some Islamic countries are clear examples of this. In Byzantine society the state appoints the men of religion, pays their salaries, and determines and regulates their behaviour by the laws [*kanunlar*] that it enacts³³³.

³²⁹ Nomer 1996, 300-307, and Allen 1935, 176-177.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*

³³¹ Lewis 1961, 406.

³³² Bulaç 1995, 215-6. Bulaç relies on Taplamacıoğlu, Mehmet (1975), *Din Sosyolojisi*, Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, Ankara. We find a similar conceptualization of Byzantine state-religion relations also in Gökalp.

³³³ *Ibid.*

The Republican *DİR* was problematic not only for the Islamists but also for mainstream Western political science. Barchard depicts it as something of an anomaly in a secular setting, describing it as “a department of the supposedly secular Turkish state”³³⁴. Yet it was totally natural within the Roman Turkish Islam of the Kemalists.

On the evening of January 16, 1923, about a year before the reforms, a meeting took place in İzmit Castle between Atatürk and leading newspaper editors, among them Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Falih Rıfkı Atay and Turkey’s foremost pro-Western liberal editor, Ahmet Emin. At a certain point the discussion revolved around the issue of the Caliph as a symbol. Yakup Kadri’s point was that the institution brought damage to the Turks. The dialogue that followed is revealing:

Mustafa Kemal: If we have been damaged, [by it], there is no need for its preservation... Besides, it cannot be our own symbol ... It is a symbol of the world of Islam. If we want to make the Caliph the head of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, there is a way for this too. That is, the President of the Grand National Assembly would be the Caliph. Is there any profit in that, I wonder? None at all. One reason for the attacks on us is that we have the reputation of a fanatically religious state. It is that we are not seen as *laik* in [our] contact with today’s civilization. Furthermore, if we give the name ‘Caliph’ to the leader we put at our head, we will appear as totally unenlightened in the eyes of the world.

Ahmet Emin: Does not the retention of the Minister of *Şeriat* (*Şer’iye Vekili*), too, have the same character?

Mustafa Kemal: Sir, *is this nation Muslim?*

Ahmet Emin: Yes...

Mustafa Kemal: When there are a lot of affairs pertaining to religious law, an authority that will look after them is needed. Call that authority Minister of *Şeriat*; call it whatever you like. The thing that will be the fundamental discussion point is the problem as to whether or not a special Minister of Islamic Religious Affairs is to be found within the form of the government. We will establish a bureau *separately*. It will appoint the imams and so on. *Naturally*, [it will be] *under the direction of the government*.

Suphi Nuri: And what about Pious Foundations Affairs?

Mustafa Kemal: The Pious Foundations are a separate matter. In essence, it is not right to assign them to Islamic religious affairs. Most of all, the Pious Foundations are one of the most important sources of wealth in our country. In addition to this, that wealth cannot be left only to the *medreses* (religious schools)³³⁵.

³³⁴ Davison 1998, 183.

³³⁵ Mahmut 1929-30, 91-92, emphasis ours.

It is clear here that, on the one hand, the overall Kemalist framework pertains to the national-worldly in relation to the civilisational, and on the other, while political Islam (Islamism) is denied it was not the same for Islam as such. Since Turkey was predominantly Muslim, its Muslim population needed an authority to deal with religious affairs. That authority, “naturally” (*tabii olarak*), would be under the overall direction of the state, which gives ‘Islam as a Turkish national religion’ its value not merely as a private good but at the same time as a public one. Moreover, although this authority would be under the supervision of and in structural connection with the state, it was to be established “separately” (“*ayrıca*”). Clearly the type of separation being referred to here is a conceptual separation in a context of structural incorporation. It was a mentality of separation of religion from politics and of preventing Islamist precepts from becoming sources that inform state political goals, decisions and actions in a milieu where religion was not only a private affair. Obviously, this mentality needed to be inter-encapsulated with an Islamic understanding which was intrinsically harmonious with it, i.e., *vahdet-i vücud* Turkish-language-based metadoxical *tasavvuf*. The Islamist writers who, like many Western historians, identify Byzantium with Caesaropapism, remain totally unaware of Roman *sinallilia*. Both they and the mainstream Anglophone literature, which judges the ‘anomaly of the *DİR*’ and *laiklik* in general from the point of view of Frankish secularism, fail to understand the true nature of Kemalist *laiklik*. Of course, this all this betrays the intrinsic relation of Islamism and Westernism; *Do not be fooled!!! Despite its Islamic rapping and/or any political clash between the two, Islamism is utterly Frankish Western in its core worldview.*

In our view, the incorporation of an entity like the *DİR* and the retention of religious functionaries on the payroll of the Republican state delimit the confines of the meaning of the supposed ‘Kemalist anticlericalism’. In fact, Kemalism was totally pro-clerical vis-à-vis Roman modernist religious functionaries representing *vahdet-i vücud* Turkish Islam. It is interesting to see the theophilosophical Islamic ‘identity’ of the Republican religious functionaries. According to Davison, “the institutional relations that were established in the course [of actualising *laiklik*] reflected a concern of the Kemalists to support – with varying degrees – a version of their interpretation of ‘pure’ Islam, which adopted aspects of the Islamic reformist ideas in Ziya Gökalp’s Turkish nationalist thought. The elimination of the Ottoman *ulema* was followed by the elevation of ‘lower-level religious personnel’ to a similar role for the Republic”³³⁶. This lower-

³³⁶ Davison 1998, 153.

level religious personnel of the late Ottoman Empire was *vahdet-i vücud*-related since very gradually after the middle 19th century and undoubtedly reaching its peak during the CUP years, we witness, as Clayer shows, an influx of (what she calls) “heterodox” *kadıs* (primarily of the *Babağan Bektaşiiyye*, the *Gülşeniyye* (a ‘heterodox’ branch of the *Halvetiyye*) and of the *Rifaiyye* (an ‘exoterically Sunni, esoterically Bektashi’ *tarikât*) from Albania particularly into the low and middle-rank state *ulema*³³⁷. Moreover, the third period “Melamism covered a wide space within the bureaucracy and among the *ulema*”³³⁸.

It is as telling for the Islamists’ religious perceptions of the founder of modern Turkey as it is distasteful for the *DİR* under the governing Islamists that the *hutbes* for the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the modern Turkish Republic did commemorate Atatürk at all! – despite him being the one who had established not only the Republic but the *DİR* itself!

Roman Turkish Islam: The State ‘Blood’ of the Muhammadan Reality

If the *DİR* constituted the corporeal ‘body’ of Islamic re-establishment, what was to be its spiritual-intelligible ‘blood’, its content?

The unearthing by Emine Usta (2005) of the series of 51 *hutbes* (Islamic sermons) compiled in Turkish by the President of *DİR*, Rıfat Börekçi, in line with Atatürk’s prescription that “the *hutbes* must be in Turkish and in accordance with the needs of the times”³³⁹ constitutes a most valuable contribution to scholarship. The publication and distribution of these *hutbes* to the mosques in 1928 was part of an accentuated effort to convey the Kemalist national-religious message to the Turkish people. Contrary to those who had turned Islam into a commercial profession, Atatürk held Börekçi in very high respect. “Whenever Börekçi visited Atatürk, the latter [always] stood up. Atatürk’s reply to [Börekçi’s protest of] ‘My Paşa, I am embarrassed’ was ‘It is a necessary requirement of Islam to show respect to religious functionaries’”³⁴⁰.

The *DİR*’s official *hutbes* convey an Islamic understanding in line with *vahdet-i vücud* Turkish Islam. Presented within a religious framework, yet related to the idea of the nation, the *hutbes* represent core *vahdet-i vücud* principles such as God as the source of all Being³⁴¹, the differentiated unity

³³⁷ Clayer 2000, 53-4.

³³⁸ Yücer 2003, 853.

³³⁹ Cündioğlu 1998, 52.

³⁴⁰ Sarıkoyuncu 2002, 232.

³⁴¹ Usta 2005, 20.

of present life and the hereafter, the harmonious co-relation between the multiple Singular and the essential Universal (private-public, individual-social, etc), the inter-encapsulation between the esoteric and the exoteric, the constant inter-encapsulation between the spiritual and the bodily (spirit-into-body, body-into-spirit), the notion of the Perfect Human Being, the constant and dynamic transformation and movement in the Cosmos, the necessity of both intellect-based worldly and heart-based religious knowledge, the differentiated unity of human beings and God through prayer, Islam as a life-based religion related to humanity as such, loving relations with non-Muslims, the differentiated unity and equality of man and woman, etc.

Börekçi makes clear that “there is no compulsion in religion” (*Hutbe* 10), and also that Islam “is at the same time both an individual and a social religion”³⁴². He also states that *hutbes* are prepared according to present conditions [the ‘multiple’], but at the same time they centre around and are arranged according to “a middle state” [the ‘Universal’]³⁴³ – as the Royal Way to *Supraness*. A key theme which runs through the vast majority of the *hutbes* is the differentiated unity of the worldly and the afterlife, and the need not to neglect either of them: “otherwise we neither find an easy life in this world nor do we gain the afterlife” (*Hutbe* 2); “without searching and working for religious and worldly knowledge (*irfan* and *bilim*), beauty cannot be expected either in this world or in the afterlife” (*Hutbe* 7); “Embrace your cosmos and your religion with four hands!” (*Hutbe* 7); “[Our Prophet] [never] neglected the [affairs of the] world for the sake of the afterlife” (*Hutbe* 45); “Our Prophet commanded: The auspicious ones among you, those with good morals, abandon neither this world nor the afterlife but work for both and do not become a burden to others” (*Hutbe* 11); “The ritual prayer performed two hours after sunset (*yatsı*) must be performed with the congregation and prayer must be performed for both our present life and our afterlife” (*Hutbe* 46); “Let us work for worldly and religious [things]” (*Hutbe* 5); and many other such points. In fact, the *sinallilistic* principle is so organically central that it is to be found in the definition of Islam itself:

[After quoting an extract from the Koran] O Muslims!

Do you see what our Prophet orders? In order to be a full Muslim, one must neglect neither this life nor the afterlife. Those who abandon the affairs of the world and work only for the afterlife are not blessed Muslims. It is the same for those who abandon the affairs of the afterlife and work only for the

³⁴² Usta 2005, 15.

³⁴³ Usta 2005, 16.

affairs of the world. The blessed human being is the one who does not abandon the affairs of the afterlife for this life, or the reverse, but works for both of them, and does not become a burden to others (*Hutbe* 33)³⁴⁴.

And again: “The perfect human being is he/she who both performs his/her religious duties and also secures his/her family's livelihood via a profession” (*Hutbe* 17).

The physical-metaphysical differentiated unity gives rise to a similar schema vis-à-vis knowledge. “[According to the Prophet:] Knowledge is needed for both the affairs of the world and those of religion. It is a religious duty for everyone, man or woman, to be educated (*Hutbe* 25). And again, “our religion orders that knowledge is a religious duty for both man and woman” (*Hutbe* 20).

Vahdet-i vücud's living and life-based understanding of religion, which relates to the cosmological principle of 'nothing stays the same even for a moment' is clearly present in the *hutbes*. “My brothers in religion! Know well that Islam is a life-religion, a religion of doing” (*Hutbe* 16). We have seen, in the Bektashi religious understanding: “*en büyük hâkim hayattır* [The greatest ruler/judge is life]”, i.e., the divine attribute-name of Life predominates over all others. Moreover, “the cosmos does not stand still, it turns and changes. All things in the universe metamorphose constantly ...” (*Hutbe* 3)³⁴⁵. And this pertains not only to the physical but to all life, including the social one: “Let us provide our children with skills. Skills which are not in harmony with the needs of the times become extinct. Because nothing stays the same in the universe, all changes continuously, even time itself” (*Hutbe* 20).

“Islam is the religion of cleanness. Cleansing and cleanness is half of Islam” (*Hutbe* 5)³⁴⁶. It pertains to Divine light: “Like his/her heart, a Muslim's house will be clean [and] shine like light” (*Hutbe* 5)³⁴⁷. The unity of the human being is based on the differentiated unity of heart-soul-body: “[according to a hadith:] God does not look at your shape, appearance, and possessions. He looks only at your hearts and deeds” (*Hutbe* 35). “The cleanness of the soul and body is one of the highest virtues in Islam. To be a Muslim means to be clean in all aspects. The heart of a Muslim will be clean, his/her body will be clean, his/her clothes will be clean, what he/she eats and drinks will be clean. The faith of those who do not pay attention to

³⁴⁴ Usta 2005, 152.

³⁴⁵ Usta 2005, 30.

³⁴⁶ Compare the Greek proverb “Cleanness is half of nobility”.

³⁴⁷ See Rumi's story of the Romans [Greeks] and the Chinese with an excellent exegesis by (Şeyh) Kenan Rifai (Rifai 2011, 448-452).

cleanness cannot be perfect” (*Hutbe* 4)³⁴⁸. The spiritual and the bodily continuously 'metastasise' into each other (faith-to-action, action-to-faith):

A non-actualised faith resembles a candle in the open air. Even a light wind extinguishes its fire. If this candle is put inside a lantern, all dangers are gone. In that manner, nobody can take away and steal your faith when you protect it with prayer and good works. If you do not appropriate your faith yourselves, if you swim day and night in evil as when you do not perform good deeds, your heart will be blackened all the more, and your faith will be weakened. ... What is the benefit of such a dry Islam? (Hutbe 7)³⁴⁹.

In typical Roman Orthodox Christian and Islamic theology That is: *both faith and works*.

The essence of prayer is the differentiated unity of the Divine and the Human in which both the incorporeal and corporeal parts of the human being are involved:

Those who do not know what the *namaz* is, those who have not attained the pleasure associated with it, think that they perform prayer by merely bending down and standing up. They do not know that the *namaz* makes the human being an angel (*melekleştirir*). The *namaz* unites together the human being and his/her Lord (*Namaz insanı Mevlâsı ile birlikte bulundurur*) ... Perform the *namaz* not only with your body, but with your heart too. There is no benefit in a *namaz* performed without the heart's involvement. Such a *namaz* cannot take the human being into the presence of God. Even if a human being performs the *namaz* in this manner for 40 years, neither his/her heart softens, nor his/her morals improve, nor does he/she take any pleasure... *Even if only for a moment, unite with God (Allah ile bir olup) and forget yourself (Hutbe 9)³⁵⁰.*

The goal of worship relates to faith, one's self and one's relation to other human beings irrespective of race, religion or language:

One does not fulfil one's religious duty rightly only by turning one's face in a specific direction and by performing the *namaz*. The fact that our name might be Ahmet or Mehmet does not save us from the torments of this and the next world. In order for our prayers to be accepted in the eyes of God, we must first believe and then have faith in the existence, unity, power, and will of God, in the fact that God is the sole creator of all things, and that the whole system moves under his command. After that there must be faith in

³⁴⁸ Usta 2005, 34.

³⁴⁹ Usta 2005, 46, emphasis ours.

³⁵⁰ Usta 2005, 55.

the Day of Judgement, in Paradise and Hell, and in the fact that the Day of Judgement is about our accountability. We must accept the Angels, all the Prophets and the Books sent to them and the holy and religious laws. In other words, one must make one's beliefs secure, look after one's relatives and defend the orphans in need. One must look after those wretched ones who are crippled by poverty, and also those who have gained their fortunes fairly must help them out of love. One must help those who come from far away, those who are delayed here as visitors without discrimination of language and religion, i.e., one must help even the non-Muslims who come to our state. ... One must get on well with all people. One should work for the good of everybody and want for others what one wants for oneself. One [should] never hurt one's neighbours (*Hutbe* 8)³⁵¹.

Believers are also told: "You must not want for others what you do not want for yourselves" (*Hutbe* 8). And all this pertains to economic life as well: "As [the Koranic text above] says, the honest merchants are together with the martyrs [in Paradise]. As is clear from this, the work of a merchant is beneficial for the country and the nation" (*Hutbe* 19). According to Şevki Koca, Rıfat Börekçi "came from a family with a Bektashi tradition"³⁵².

In the Ramadan of 1342 [April-May 1924], the Republic's first Ramadan, two pieces of the Koran in Turkish were independently published. In September of the same year, another piece surfaced. According to Cündioğlu, these translations, due to their inadequacy, were subjected to serious criticism and the *DİR*, by issuing *fetvas* against the two pieces, recommended Muslims not to be taken in by them³⁵³. Probably in early 1925, the Turkish National Assembly decided to commission a Turkish translation of and commentary on the Koran under the supervision of the Presidency of Religious Affairs³⁵⁴. An extra amount of 12,000 lira was assigned to the latter's budget for that purpose. The general attitude of the *alims* as far as the possibility of such a task was concerned was generally negative. After numerous discussions and arguments, the task of translation was given to the author of the Turkish national anthem, Mehmet Akif Ersoy, and that of exegesis (*tefsir*) to Elmalılı Mehmet Hamdi Yazır. For the translation project, Atatürk had sent Mehmet Akif (who was in self-imposed exile in Egypt) the sum of 10,000 Turkish lira, but the great poet, patriot yet Islamist Mehmet Akif never produced a translation, something that was finally done with some problems by Elmalılı Mehmet Hamdi Yazır. It is also interesting to note that the intermediary between Atatürk and the

³⁵¹ Usta 2005, 50-1.

³⁵² Şevki Koca's letter to the author dated Nov 8, 2001 (21 *Recep-Hicri* 1422).

³⁵³ Cündioğlu 1999, 31.

³⁵⁴ Kaya 1998, 161.

Islamist Mehmet Akif was the religious conservative Prime Minister İnönü³⁵⁵.

Elmalılı Mehmet Hamdi Yazır's commentary proved to be a seminal work under the title *Hak Dini Kuran Dili* (*The True Religion, The Language of the Koran*) (1935), and was approved by the DİR. It represented the key to the transformation of a Muslim identity into a new national Islamic identity. As Kaya says, the DİR-supported *Sahih-i Buhari Muhtasari Tecrid-i Sarih Tercemesi* (one of the most important collections of hadiths compiled by Imam Buhari (810 – 869 AD)) and Elmalılı Mehmet Hamdi Yazır's *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili*³⁵⁶ added substantially to Turkish culture. As far as the first work was concerned it was part of the policy 'Islam as the Turkish National Religion' of Atatürk and a future Minister of Education, Dr Reşit Galip (1893-1934 AD)³⁵⁷. As for the latter, not only it was composed on Atatürk's initiative, but with his own personal involvement³⁵⁸. The librarian of the Presidential Library, Nuri Ulusu, states:

I took part in most of the preparations relating to [Elmalılı Mehmet Hamdi Yazır's *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili*]. Sometimes while working [on them], Atatürk became highly affected by the exegeses and said 'Oh, my great God ... Those who do not believe in the Koran are unbelievers. How [exalted] is the path that the Koran shows us[!] We must make the world read this'. And he would say to me: 'My soul overflows when I read this, does it happen to you too?' and at that moment his eyes would take on a slightly far-away look and become reddish³⁵⁹.

As Hatice Özserağ's *Elmalılı M. Hamdi Yazır ve Tasavvuf Anlayışı* (Elmalılı M. Hamdi Yazır and his *Tasavvuf* Understanding) clearly shows, *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili* was a *vahdet-i vücud*-related work. Although Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır raises some points of contention associated with it, Özserağ's view is that "these [basically] show that he tried to elaborate the theory of *vahdet-i vücud* in a form that could be acceptable to Sunnis"¹⁴⁰. In fact, this need for further explanation concerned only a section of the Turkish Sunnis. It is significant that neither the supposedly İnönü's regime nor the pro-Frankish Turkish regimes (Westernist, Islamist, racist nationalist, etc) that followed ever officially published Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır's *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili* again.

³⁵⁵ Borak 1998b., 75.

³⁵⁶ Kaya 1998, 209.

³⁵⁷ Cündioğlu 1999, 258.

³⁵⁸ Ulusu 2008, 184.

³⁵⁹ Ulusu 2008, 185.

Out with Tarikats and Şeyhs: The Path to Roman Batuni Turkish National Islam

In the conflict-ridden atmosphere of seventeenth-century Istanbul, a specific branch of the *Bayramiyye* Sufi order, which was known as either the *Hamzaviyye* or the *Idrisiyye* at the time, was able to take root among Istanbul's cultural and political elite. The order, which during the eighteenth century came to be known as the Melami branch of the *Bayramiyye*, transformed itself from what had been perceived as a low-class deviant Sufi movement into a spiritual brotherhood that ventured beyond the *tarikāt* affiliation... This effort was a necessary part of forging a new image for the order, and it enabled them to be included within the Sunna-conscious Sufi networks in the following centuries. One of the critical steps in this process was the order's adoption of the concept of *melāmet*³⁶⁰.

The key person in this transformation was Sarı Abdullah (d. 1660). Among the two key characteristics of the order was a fervent love for Ali and *Ehl-i Beyt* who, in Sarı Abdullah's writings, end up becoming the origin of an intertwining between the *Melamiyye* and the *Naqşibendiyye* – the latter must have been represented by the *vahdet-i vücud*-based *Ahrâriyye* branch. A centrally emphasised reality of the *Hamzaviyye* was exhibiting an

extraordinary loyalty and dedication to the saints (*awliya*)... The notion that there is bound to be one unique spiritual persona (*kutb*), who is the mirror of divinity in any given age is particularly significant in this regard. Such ideas, however, were not alien to the broader Sufi milieu of the time, and writings that were admired among the cultured Sufis of Istanbul, particularly those of Ibn 'Arabi (d. 1240), were known to have expressed similar ideas. Therefore, it was not seen as alarming when Sarı Abdullah wrote the following without revealing any overt political agenda: “even now, the time is not devoid of the esteemed person who is the rising [*kāim*] saint of the time, the inheritor of the legacy of the absolute and complete sainthood of Muhammad. This celebrated person who is the inheritor of the true perfection of the prophet is called the axis of the ages [*kutb-u devrān*], the greatest succour [*gavs-i 'azām*], and the unique one of the age [*vāhīdu 'z-zamān*]. [Imam] Ali said: ‘whoever dies without knowing the leader [*imām*] of his time, dies as someone from the time of ignorance’.”³⁶¹.

The overt political agenda for Melamism, in general, came two and a half centuries later in the person of the *kutb* of the early 20th century, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

³⁶⁰ Yavuz 2019, 121.

³⁶¹ Yavuz 2019, 129-130.

We have already seen that the last *pîr* of the *Hamzaviyye* was Abdülkadir Belhi and the issues relating to Bursalı Mehmed Efendi and ultimately Atatürk. The early 18th-century institutionalisation-with-institutions of the *Hamzaviyye*, which defy the Frankish Catholicism-derived top-down approaches to religious transformation, echoes down to the institutional abolition of the *tarikats* in 1925 – as it is also that of the third period Melamism.

On the other hand, the *Hamzaviyye* did not become institutionalised in the sense that they built their activities around a Sufi convent or followed traditional Sufi rituals. Instead, they slowly constructed an alternative mode of belonging to a spiritual community, one in which adherents enjoyed reading and discussing some of the fundamental texts of the Sufi theosophy. The *pîrs* (the heads of the order) continued to reside at their houses and accept visitors there rather than inhabiting Sufi lodges, and common Sufi practices of excessive worship and *zîkr* (remembering and reciting the names of God in a certain manner) were hardly ever employed. Finally, and quite significantly, in contrast to their illiterate/vernacular beginnings, literacy and learning became a mark of the order's hold among the bureaucrats³⁶².

In other words, the impetus behind the abolition was not merely worldly but, in a sinallilistic inter-encapsulating manner, essentially religious. The Kemalist abolition of the *tarikats* came from within *vahdet-i vücud* Islam and not from without. Bear with us.

The 1925 official closure of the *tekkes* and the expulsion of the *tarikât* leaders from their positions are usually seen as portraying a wholesale anti-*tasavvuf* stance on the part of the Kemalist revolutionaries. Yet in its essence, this interpretation is valid only from outside the Kemalists' standpoint, i.e., from a standpoint foreign to Roman *batîni* Islam in its 'Sunni' and 'Shii' (Bektashi/Alevi) actualisations. This, for example, can be a supposedly 'neutral' secular Enlightenment-based standpoint and/or one situated within non-Roman Islamism. As we have seen in our discussion on Gökâlp and Atatürk, the theosophy and '*tarikats*' which inter-encapsulate best with the Gökâlpian triadic modernisation-nationalisation-Islamisation schema and the policy of 'Islam as the Turkish national religion' are the Roman Turkish *Bektaşîyye/Alevîyye*, the *Mevlevîyye* (especially its *Şems* branch), and the *Melamiyye-i Nuriyye*; while the pro-Caliphal Islamist India-imported *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye* and its *Hâlidiyye* sub-branch does not doctrinally fit the dualistically monistic Republican model without somehow corrupting it – or without itself being adapted to the former. Irrespective of the final outcome, was the Kemalist

³⁶² Yavuz 2019, 123.

leadership acting within this overall understanding or did it consciously and indiscriminately launch an assault on institutionalised *tasavvuf*? And most importantly, what was the meaning of and reaction to the banning of the *tarikats*?

The organic relationship of the *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye* and its *Hâlidiyye* branch with pre-Republican Islamist revolts (like the *31 Mart Olayı* of 1909³⁶³), with two versions of the *Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası* (*HİF*, Freedom and Entente Party), and during and in the years immediately following the War of independence, with the anti-Kemalist opposition (the “Second Group”) were well known to the Kemalists. In fact, this anti-Roman opposition was based on an intrinsic relationship between unconditional Westernism and Islamism³⁶⁴. While the formal establishment of the Second Group took place on July 16, 1922³⁶⁵, the origins of the split within the *Anadolu ve Rumeli Müdafaa-i Hukuk Cemiyeti* (The Anatolia and Rumelia Society for the Defence of National Rights) slowly began with the final and clear assumption by Mustafa Kemal of the leadership of the national resistance and the establishment of the First Group in May 1921. Indeed, it is common among the contemporary participants themselves (like Atatürk³⁶⁶) to describe this developing opposition as “the Second Group” even for the period before its official establishment. “The members excluded from [Atatürk’s First Group] now came together under the name of the Second Group, which became the opposition party. The leaders of the opposition represented constituencies in the east of the country: in Erzurum, the Society for the Defence of National Rights added to its title the words ‘and for the Protection of the Sacred Heritage (*Muhafaza-yı Mukaddesat*). The heritage was the sultanate, the caliphate and the Islamic law (*şeriat*)”³⁶⁷. According to Gölpınarlı, the *Hâlidi* branch of the *Nakşibendiyye* played an important role in the establishment of the *Muhafaza-yı Mukaddesat* Society, as it did in that of the *Teâlî-i İslâm Cemiyeti* (Society for the Elevation of

³⁶³ On the subject of *The 31 Mart Olayı* see Akşin (1994) and Kocahanoğlu (2003).

³⁶⁴ Apart from any common political interests, Westernism (Catholico-Protestant Christianity, Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment moral philosophies) and Islamism (including *vahdet-i şuhûd*) share key theological-philosophical principles and conceptions of reality, e.g. a notion of a duty-based legalism in the relations between God (or/and the state) and the human being, the notion of a punishing revengeful God who stands as a constant judge, a conception of an utterly sin-related human nature, etc.

³⁶⁵ Yeşil 2002, 79.

³⁶⁶ Atatürk 2001, 449.

³⁶⁷ Mango 1999, 313-4.

Islam)³⁶⁸. This latter society was connected to the *Hîf* and the *Tarikat-ı Salâhiyye*³⁶⁹. The Progressive Republican Party (*Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası, TCF*), which was established on Nov 17, 1924, ideologically came to reflect a Republicanised continuation of the pre-Republican Westernist-Islamist alliance. Opposing Kemalist Republican dualistic monism, it argued for a merely dualist state model based not on revolution but “on evolution and gradualism”³⁷⁰. Taking place under the new political conditions brought about by the declaration of the Republic, the abolition of the Caliphate, etc, it understandably “did not constitute a direct extension of the Second Group as such but of former First Group members who favoured the ideas and methods of that [Second] Group”³⁷¹. On the one hand, the Party favoured ‘Westernising’ reforms, while on the other it flirted, as far as possible, with Islamists and Islamist concerns. While some of its important officials (like Kâzım Karabekir) did not, some others put forward ideas which, within the conditions of the time, could only be interpreted as pro-Islamist. At one point the Secretary of the *TCF*, Fethi Bey, stated: “[We] the Progressives are religious. [Atatürk’s] *CHF* destroys religion. We will save it and defend it”³⁷².

The 1925 Şeyh Sait Rebellion constituted a watershed for the Kemalist revolution. On the constructive side it accentuated the pace of the re-Romanisation-oriented modern Kemalist revolutionary *laik* reforms gradually leading to the policy of ‘Islam as the Turkish national religion’. On the destructive side it resulted in the abolition of *tekkes* and the banning of political entities which could, intentionally or not, be used as centres of Islamist political activity – including the *TCF*³⁷³. The actual Şeyh Sait Rebellion began in the *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye*-dominated predominantly Kurdish areas in South-East Turkey. Assembling a force of about 15,000 men, Şeyh Sait of the India-originated *Nakşibendiyye* rebelled against the Romanising Turkish Kemalist state on Feb 13th, 1925 with the purpose of re-instituting a *şeriat*-based Caliphate and accusing “the government of irreligion, and of planning to abolish religion”³⁷⁴. It took the Kemalist government four-and-a-half months and about 25,000 troops to pacify the area. On the overall nature of the rebellion, Kalafat argues that:

³⁶⁸ Gölpinarlı 1997, 219.

³⁶⁹ Çukurova 1994, 135.

³⁷⁰ Yeşil 2002, 222.

³⁷¹ Yeşil 2002, 219.

³⁷² Kalafat 2003, 67.

³⁷³ It does not seem that the *TCF* was directly involved in the rebellion.

³⁷⁴ Kalafat 2003, 82-3 and 87.

Those groups [which wanted a return to the Caliphate and Sultanate] brought about an outburst of religious character because the Kemalist movement had acted against the religious mentality and interests of the tribal leaders. Some Kurdish nationalist ideologues wanted to transform the nature of those fundamental yet religious interests. The British, who were looking for a pretext, lent their support [to the rebels] in various phases of the Rebellion³⁷⁵.

Even if one accepts some aspects of the rebellion as relating to a kind of proto-Kurdish nationalism, this was not a Roman one and was interconnected with the non-Roman Indian/Pakistani *Nakşibendiyye*. It is significant that the Roman Kurdish Alevis did not take part in the rebellion, and actively supported the Kemalist modern Roman order³⁷⁶. In the previous decades they had been experiencing continuous religio-military *Nakşibendi* violence. The *Hamidiye Alayları* (*Hamidiye Regiments*), which had been formed in the time of Abdülhamid with the aim of combating Armenian violence and restoring central authority in those areas, continuously clashed also with the Kurdish-speaking Alevis even as late as the early years of the Republic³⁷⁷. These regiments comprised of Sunni Kurds from tribes with strong connections to the *Nakşibendiyye-i Hâlidîyye*. The British diplomat Stokes reported:

... the antithesis between the Sunnis and the Alevis is great; we can develop this antithesis even more...³⁷⁸.

On Nov 30, 1925 the President of the *T.B.M.M.*, Refik (Koraltan) Bey (MP for Konya), opened the deliberations on Law 677 on *The Closure of the Tekkes, Small Dervish Lodges and Tombs, and the Abolition of the Positions of Tomb Keepers and their relevant Titles*. Given the critical importance of the issue, there can be little doubt that the draft law was closely scrutinised – if not drafted - by Atatürk himself, who closely followed the debate in the Assembly. While the first paragraph of Article 1 of the draft law stipulated that all *tekkes* relating to *şeyhs* were to be closed down, its second paragraph clarifies to which ‘*şeyhs*’ the law applied. It reads: “In general, along with the *tarikats*, titles and positions like that of *şeyhlik* [*şeyh*- hood], *dervişlik* [dervish-hood] and *mürîdlik* [(disciple-

³⁷⁵ Kalafat 2003, 288.

³⁷⁶ For the Kurdish Alevi stance see Yeşil 2002, 420-421, Kalafat 2003, 215-216, and Bruinessen 1992, 294.

³⁷⁷ Yeşil 2002, 362 and 422.

³⁷⁸ Öz 1996, 43, quoting from Ulubelen, Erol (1982), *İngiliz Gizli Belgelerinde Türkiye* [*Turkey in British Secret Documents*], Çağdaş Yayınları, İstanbul, 270.

hood)] and the services and special attire related to them are prohibited”³⁷⁹. And it becomes even more specific further on, when it assigns legal penalties to, among others, “those bearing the titles *şeyh*, *derviş*, *mürîd* and *türbedar* [tomb-keeper]”³⁸⁰. While the draft law drove the non-Roman (non-Turkish) imported *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye* and its *Hâlidiyye* sub-branch to official extinction, in terms of religious identity – not necessarily in terms of organisation (buildings, etc) - it left the Roman Turkish *Bektaşîyye/Alevîyye*, the *Mevlevîyye* (especially its *Şems* branch), and the *Melamîyye-i Nuriyye* practically untouched, since none of the titles relating to their hierarchies (*dede/baba* and *çelebi* in the *Babağan* and the *Çelebi* (Alevi) branches of the *Bektaşîyye* respectively; *dede* and *çelebi* in the *Mevlevîyye*; and *kutb* in the *Melamîyye-i Nuriyye*) are included in it.

It is important to note that in Atatürk’s mind the fact that the final form of the law included the titles relating to the *Bektaşîyye* and *Mevlevîyye* was in reality a tactical compromise of no essential significance to the doctrinal inter-encapsulation between Kemalism and those two ‘*tarikats*’ - especially for a *batîni tasavvufî* person. Among other things, this is clear from the fact that in Afet İnan’s *Medenî Bilgiler* [Civics] (1931), a handbook distributed in the Republic’s schools, there is the statement (copied from a text written in Atatürk’s own hand): “Moreover, all the *tekkes*, the small dervish lodges, and the tombs within the Turkish Republic were closed down by law. The *tarikats* were abolished. *Şeyhlik*, *dervişlik*, *çelebilik*, *halifelik* [position of officially ordained assistant to a *şeyh*], *falcılık* [fortune-telling], *büyücülük* [sorcery], and *türbedarlık* were prohibited. Because those were the sources of backwardness and ignorance. The Turkish nation could not and did not endure such institutions. *Laiklik* ...”³⁸¹. The fact that Atatürk included the title of *çelebi(lik)* in his text clearly shows the proximity of himself and his republican endeavour to the *Babağan* branch of the *Bektaşîyye/Alevîyye* and the *Şems* (Bektashi) branch of the *Mevlevîyye*. The one-time Selanik *Meydan Dedesi* and *Kutbu’l-Aktâb* knew very well where the sources of the problem were located.

In the discussion on the draft law in the Assembly there were basically two main reactions, proposing certain amendments to it. They seem to display a unity, at least of purpose, on the part of the persons involved. They were originated by Tunalı Hilmi (MP for Zonguldak), Ahmed Hamdi (MP

³⁷⁹ T.B.M.M. (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi) Zabıt Ceridesi, Devre: II, Cilt: 19, *İçtima Senesi: III*, 17nci

İçtima, 30 Teşrinisani 1341 Pazartesi, Cilt:1, 284.

³⁸⁰ T.B.M.M. (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi) Zabıt Ceridesi, Devre: II, Cilt: 19, *İçtima Senesi: III*, 17nci *İçtima*, 30 Teşrinisani 1341 Pazartesi, Cilt:1, 284.

³⁸¹ Afetinan 1969/1931, 72-3 and 556.

for Yozgat) and Süleyman Sırrı (MP for Yozgat). The former two proposed the inclusion of the title *dede* among the prohibited *tarikat*-related titles³⁸². The latter related that, during his two-year period as administrative head of the Hacibektaş sub-district, he had observed the debased state of the Bektashi central *tekke* there, and that a number of Albanian “parasite *dede, baba*”³⁸³ Bektashis had acquired farmlands there. Since the draft law proposed the closure of the *tekkes*, Süleyman Sırrı asked for the inclusion of an article that would prevent those Bektashis appropriating the *tekkes* for themselves³⁸⁴. In practice, such an article would clearly make not only those specific Bektashis but Bektashism as such one of the targets of the law. Unfortunately for Süleyman Sırrı, Atatürk knew very well who these Albanian Bektashis were.

Hüsameddin Bey (Ertürk) (1874-1944 AD), was a *Babağan* Bektashi military officer who had been head of the *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa*, the secret intelligence-covert action organisation of CUP, a member of one of its successors, the *Karakol Cemiyeti*, and later the similarly tasked *Mim Mim* Group (*M.M. Grubu*), and after their dissolution, the head of the intelligence unit of the General Staff, which was the primary intelligence organisation between 1923-1926. Like Atatürk himself, he was decorated with the red-ribbon Independence Medal for his services to the Republic. At some point during mid-late 1921, when the opposition to Atatürk was increasing both inside and outside the National Assembly and Atatürk was planning elections, Atatürk asked his help in enlisting support from the Anatolian Alevis against their ‘leader’, Cemaleddin Çelebi, who had become somehow connected to *HİF*³⁸⁵. Ertürk enlisted the help of the head of the *Babağan* branch of the *Bektaşîyye*, the Albanian Salih Niyazi Dede-baba, and the other *Babağan* members who occupied most of the key posts at the *Hacı Bektaş Dergâh (Pir-Evi)*. After reassuring Ertürk that they would support Atatürk they asked for immediate permission to be given for the settlement of about 40 Bektashi *Babas* from Albania in Anatolia in an effort to help turn the Alevis away from Cemaleddin Çelebi and towards the

³⁸² T.B.M.M. (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi) Zabıt Ceridesi, Devre: II, Cilt: 19, *İçtima Senesi: III, 17nci*

İçtima, 30 Teşrinisani 1341 Pazartesi, Cilt: I, 286.

³⁸³ T.B.M.M. (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi) Zabıt Ceridesi, Devre: II, Cilt: 19, *İçtima Senesi: III, 17nci*

İçtima, 30 Teşrinisani 1341 Pazartesi, Cilt: I, 288.

³⁸⁴ T.B.M.M. (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi) Zabıt Ceridesi, Devre: II, Cilt: 19, *İçtima Senesi: III, 17nci*

İçtima, 30 Teşrinisani 1341 Pazartesi, Cilt: I, 284.

³⁸⁵ Ertürk 1957, 523-4.

nationalists-pro-Kemalists. Atatürk permitted this measure, which, according to Ertürk, proved very important for winning over the Alevi populations³⁸⁶.

We should also note that during Atatürk's critical visit to Hacıbektaş on December 23, 1919 it was not Cemaleddin Çelebi but Salih Niyâzî Dedebaba who first welcomed him there – with their initial meeting taking place in the farmland of Salih Niyâzî *Dedebaba*. From there they proceeded to the *Pir- Evi*. Salih Niyâzî Dedebaba, an old member of the CUP, was described by Kansu as “a freethinker and very progressive”³⁸⁷. When they arrived at the *Pir-Evi* and Salih Niyâzî Dedebaba had withdrawn inside it, they were brought into the presence of Cemaleddin Çelebi. As Kansu and Şapolyo describe it, Atatürk *personally participated* in the Bektashi/Alevi *Ayn-i Cem* by asking for and drinking the customary blessed *rakı* and wine. It must be remembered that in general non-Bektashis were not allowed to take part in the Bektashi *Ayn-i Cem*³⁸⁸. Little is known about the content of the conversations that took place between Atatürk and the two leaders of the *Bektaşîyye*. It is of interest to note that while Atatürk's meeting with Cemaleddin Çelebi lasted about two hours, that with Salih Niyâzî Dedebaba lasted about seven hours. Salih Niyâzî Dedebaba remained a strong supporter of Atatürk and Kemalism throughout his years in Turkey³⁸⁹. It is interesting that Süleyman Sırrı takes issue with the *Babağan* branch of the *Bektaşîyye*, not mentioning at all the Çelebi branch, in which the official titles and positions are hereditary and held “usually [by] ignorant [persons], who have produced almost no works about *tasavvuf* and the *tarikât*”³⁹⁰.

The discussion of the proposed amendments to the draft law on the closure of the *tarikats* resumed after about a 20-minute break. There can be no doubt that these amendments were brought to the attention of Atatürk. It does not take much to understand why Süleyman Sırrı's proposal was finally rejected. The fact that his target was the *Bektaşîyye* as such is clear

³⁸⁶ This story seems to depend upon oral history. Bülent Çukurova, an expert on the period, states that although Ertürk's information may appear exaggerated from time to time, in general it is corroborated by the archival documents of the *Mim Mim Group* as well as the unpublished memoirs of Field Marshal Fevzi Çakmak (Çukurova 1994, 23-24).

³⁸⁷ Kansu 1966 Vol. II, 493-4.

³⁸⁸ Thus Turgut Koca (Halifebaba) did not permit Hülya Küçük to witness that Bektashi ceremony because “only Bektashis could attend” (Hülya Küçük 2002, 242).

³⁸⁹ Salih Niyâzî Dedebaba left Turkey for Albania on 17/1/1930 [Noyan (Dedebaba) 1998, 341]

³⁹⁰ Sunar 2003, 11.

from his reaction to the decision of the Justice Committee, announced to him by Ahmet Hamdi Bey: “If this proposal is rejected, tomorrow [the Bektashis] will base their reaction on property rights. [Incomprehensible in the context] What are you? A Bektashi?”³⁹¹. This question was really addressed to Atatürk. And he was – but not merely Bektashi.

Despite the fact – as the *Medeni Bilgiler* case shows - that Atatürk did not personally favour the inclusion of the titles of *baba* and *dede*, that amendment was adopted, for a variety of reasons. “Before the closure for the second time [in history] of the Bektashi *dergâhs*, there were voices arguing for exceptional treatment for the Bektashi and Mevlevi *dergâhs*. Yet they were closed bearing in mind that at a period in the early days of the Republic and at the beginning of the *Naşkıbendi* revolts members of the other Path [i.e., *Naşkıbendis*] could infiltrate those *dergâhs* in a harmful way”³⁹². According to the philosopher-teacher Kâzım Gülpınar, not long after the adoption of the law, the following dialogue ensued between Atatürk and Veled Çelebi, who had become the temporary head of the Konya *Mevlevihâne* after Abdülhalim Çelebi’s death in 1925³⁹³:

- [Atatürk:] I am very regretful about the closure of the Bektashi and Mevlevi *dergâhs*.
- [Veled Çelebi:] (My Paşa), you did not [really] close down (those *dergâhs*). (They are open) because they [cannot] be closed down. What you call *dergâh* is not a (stone-made) building. What the law closes down is a building (and after that he read) Mevlana's distich “My grave is in the hearts of the knowers”³⁹⁴.

One of the most important *tasavvufî* masters of that time was the founder Şeyh of the latest Lodge of the *Rifaiyye* in Istanbul (*Ümmü Ken'ân Dergâhı*), Ken'ân Rifâî (Büyükaksoy) (Salonica 1869-Istanbul 1950 AD). Although adding his own understanding on various *tasavvufî* matters, “on issues relating to being and *vücud*, Rifâî had recourse to İbnü'l-Arabî's views and works”³⁹⁵. Among other things, Rifâî was particularly renowned for his great commentaries on Rumi's works in which we frequent encounter key Anatolian *tasavvufî* masters like Yunus Emre, Hacı Bayram

³⁹¹ T.B.M.M. (*Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi*) *Zabıt Ceridesi*, *Devre: II, Cilt: 19, İçtima Senesi: III, 17nci*

İçtima, 30 *Teşrinisani 1341 Pazartesi*, *Cilt: I, 288*.

³⁹² Noyan (Dedebaba) 2002, 5.

³⁹³ Gölpınarlı 1953, 181.

³⁹⁴ Noyan (Dedebaba) 2002, 5.

³⁹⁵ Yalçinkaya 2021, 289.

Veli, Gülşehrî, Niyâzî-i Misrî, Aşık Paşa and Şeyh Galip. He was particularly interested in promoting the role of women in *tasavvuf*. In her commendable work on Ken'ân Rifâî, Arzu Eylül Yalçinkaya writes that concerning the closure of the *tekkes* in 1925,

Rifâî accepted the [Atatürkist] state's policy as God's providence/provision and saying: "O! you arriving ones [to God], whatever we were before, we are also now! Before, we were confidants in the exoteric *tekke*, now we are heart-pleasing/kind in the *tekke* of the heart. Allah willed so, He did so. Since this comes from Him, all is pleasant", he showed that he did not find the abolition of the lodges as becoming a deficiency/imperfection for *tasavvufi* life³⁹⁶.

In a recent interview, the daughter of one of Rifâî's disciples, Ömer Faruk Sargut and one of his *halifes*, Meşkûre Sargut, a *tasavvufi* scholar and prominent person of the *Rifaiyye*, Cemâlnur Sargut (studied under another of Rifâî's *halifes*, Sâmiha Ayverdi) relates the following:

Atatürk, whom Rifâî had great love and respect for, offered him the Ministry of National Education, but he did not accept it, saying "I am a person concerned with religion". He was the first person to say that the dervish lodges should be closed and closed his own lodge himself. He was one of the first to wear the [Western] hat. Because at that time dervish lodges started to apply a [hereditary] system passing down the direction of the *tekkes* from father to son. Even today this matter has gone the wrong way. We see *şeyhs* who are fond of lust and materialism, all of which are the result of the system of inheritance from father to son³⁹⁷.

Now Romanity meets Romanity:

After he retired in 1921 and until he fell ill before his passing away, Rifâî continued his teaching activities in the *Phanar Roman Orthodox Christian Male Lyceum* and the *Phanar Ioakimion Roman Orthodox Christian Female Lyceum* as an instructor of Turkish language... [The related anecdotes from there] constitute records about the interest and manifested love Rifâî enjoyed in these institutions³⁹⁸.

It is interesting to note that one of those who proposed the inclusion of the titles *baba* and *dede* in Law 677, namely Tunalı Hilmi, belonged to those

³⁹⁶ Yalçinkaya 2021, 282-283.

³⁹⁷ Sargut 2012.

³⁹⁸ Yalçinkaya 2021, 133-134.

anti-Kemalist groups out of which the *TCF* had been formed³⁹⁹, favouring parts of the more Westernophile liberal and Islamist agendas. Along with a small number of Bektashi Kemalists, a former leader of the *TCF* (closed down on June 2, 1925), Kâzım Karabekir, expressed his opposition to the closure out of personal affiliation to the *Bektaşîyye*⁴⁰⁰ – yet he was more a Freemason than a Bektashi, since he retained his Freemason identity even after Ottoman Freemasonry was de-Romanised from about 1918 onwards (i.e., after the occupation of Istanbul by the Frankish *Entente* Powers). Kâzım Karabekir was a fierce enemy of Atatürk and a source of much vitriolic disinformation about Kemalism⁴⁰¹. The *TCF* had opposed (at least on paper) the proliferation of *tekkes* in general (art. 19 of the party programme)⁴⁰². In the end, according to the Bektashi Şevki Koca, it was İnönü's "all or nothing" policy that prevailed⁴⁰³.

We should also note that İnönü was a religious orthopractic conservative. May be his religious conservatism related to his probable partly Kurdish origins⁴⁰⁴. Cebesoy states that İnönü had not really believed in the idea of the War of Independence, which he found unreasonable, arguing that there was no other remedy but to retreat to his farm and perform prayers to God for the salvation of Turkey⁴⁰⁵. It is not at all accidental that İnönü escaped from occupied Istanbul only at a very late stage and joined the National Struggle very reluctantly⁴⁰⁶. And it is most interesting that he did so via a *Nakşibendi tekke*, the *Özbekler Tekkesi* at Üsküdar⁴⁰⁷. There is no doubt that this *tekke* made a significant contribution to the Turkish national struggle by smuggling people and weapons to Anatolia. But it is also true that, as even a quick glance at the names of those who frequented that *tekke* shows, these included key personalities related to religious conservatism, Islamism and unconditional Westernism, such as Rauf Orbay, Adnan and Halide Edip Adıvar, Mehmet Akif Ersoy, etc.

There was no real opposition on the part of the *Bektaşîyye* to the wholesale closure of the *tekkes* – which, in any case, was never fully

³⁹⁹ Yeşil 2002, 180.

⁴⁰⁰ Koca 2000, 350.

⁴⁰¹ See Cengiz Özakinci İle "Tarihin Bilinmeyen Yüzü", https://www.academia.edu/65120750/Tarihin_Bilinmeyen_Yüzü_Program_Arşivi, accessed Oct 27, 2023; and also, below.

⁴⁰² Yeşil 2002, 231.

⁴⁰³ Koca 1999, 350.

⁴⁰⁴ Mango 1999, 428.

⁴⁰⁵ Cebesoy 2001, 357.

⁴⁰⁶ Cebesoy 2001, 357.

⁴⁰⁷ For the history of this *tekke* see, for example, Altun 2003.

enforced. Dirks states that the Bektashis declared their satisfaction with the *laiklik* measures taken by Atatürk, despite the fact that these “had not prevented their convents/monasteries from being dissolved, like those of all the other dervish orders”⁴⁰⁸. “Even though he suffered the pain and sadness caused by the injustice done to Bektashism by the application of Law 677, [Turgut Koca Halifebaba] supported wholeheartedly and was an unadulterated defender of the Republican revolutionary measures and the views and directives of the Gazi Paşa as he expressed them in the Great Speech (*Büyük Nutuk*)”⁴⁰⁹. In 1931 a Bektashi writer published a series of 40 articles in *Yeni Gün* newspaper (January 26 - March 8, 1931), arguing that with the establishment of the Kemalist Republic all the aims of Bektashism had been achieved, so there was no need for it any more⁴¹⁰. The Bektashi poet Kurbanî Kılıç wrote the following poem: “I am following in your footsteps – And I do not change my way – Grandchild of the Imams, Pir Hacı Bektaş – Wherever I stand, wherever I am, I hail Kemal – who accepted the principles of Pir Hacı Bektaş”⁴¹¹. According to the Bektashi *halifebaba* Turgut Koca, quoted by Hülya Küçük, “the government did not close down the Bektashi *tekkes*: they were already closed, as they were open only to Bektashis. Closing them down changed nothing, as their ceremonies were performed in Bektashis’ homes or places closed to outsiders. In addition, according to him, after the banning of the orders in 1925, the educational activities of the Bektashis went on at house-meetings. The closing down of the orders paved the way for the opportunity of a Bektashi education for the whole family, making more progress in educational opportunities for women”⁴¹². In her typically negative approach to *Babağan* Bektashi sources, which at times borders on academic bias, Hülya Küçük is dismissive of this information as essentially anachronistic, in the sense that the Bektashis tried to portray a pretended and fake proximity to the Kemalist regime having faced the *de facto* closure of their *tekkes*: “But it is rather doubtful if they were sincere, especially when we consider the situation today”⁴¹³. It is not difficult to demonstrate the unsoundness of this judgement. Firstly, taking the attitudes of the Bektashis/Alevis towards today’s Turkish regime – which is led by persons related to the *Nakşibendiyye* and its various sub-branches – as a basis for drawing conclusions about the Kemalist period is

⁴⁰⁸ Dirks 1977, 104.

⁴⁰⁹ Koca 1999.

⁴¹⁰ Yücer 2003, 535.

⁴¹¹ Kitsikis 2001, 217. For other dervish poetry dedicated to Atatürk see Nasrattınoğlu 1992.

⁴¹² Hülya Küçük 2002, 241-242.

⁴¹³ Hülya Küçük 2002, 241.

utterly invalid. Secondly and more importantly, if we look at the *Rehber-i Tekâyâ* [The *Tekke* Guide] (1921) of Erzurumlu Yeşilzâde Mehmed Salih Efendi (d. 1954), we see that the belief that the actual *dergâhs* were not really relevant to Bektashism was indeed widespread among the Bektashis, and that much of their religious activity had already been transferred to Bektashis' houses at least four to six years *before* the closure of the *tekkes*. After providing information on twelve Bektashi *dergâhs* existing at that time in Istanbul, Yeşilzâde Mehmed Salih Efendi continues: "When a Bektashi is asked which *tekke* he/she belongs to, he/she gives this answer: Hey, you listen! The heart of every dervish is a *tekke*, the house of every Bektashi is a *dergâh*. We perform our *ayin* everywhere, we drink"⁴¹⁴. It is also interesting to note that in another part of her book, where she discusses Bektashism after the destruction of the *Yeniçeris*, Hülya Küçük herself fully acknowledges the fact that increasingly Bektashi activity was transferred to Bektashi homes⁴¹⁵. The doctrinal proximity between Kemalism and Bektashism/Alevism can also be seen from the fact that while both Sultan Mahmud and Atatürk closed down the Bektashi *tekkes*, the Bektashis have always been totally hostile to the former, calling him "Sultan Maymun (Sultan Monkey)"⁴¹⁶, while they revere the latter, perceiving him as a *mehdi*, an *evliya* (saint), or the 'metempsychosis' of Hacı Bektaş himself. Moreover, after the closure of the Bektashi *tekkes*, the Kemalist Republic 'compensated' the loss by elevating the *Bektaşîyye* to the level of a religious constituent of the Turkish national *laik* identity, and of Turkish civilisation in general. As Mirmiroglou states, "The official committee that was formed according to the stipulations of Circular 17.645/50 providing instructions for the application of the Law on the Abolition of the *Tekkes*, devoted a whole month to create an inventory of the property of the central Bektashi *Tekke*. From the time spent there, it is easy to understand the importance of this *Tekke*. [A great number of items were sent to the General Museum of the Pious Foundations [*Vakıflar Müzesi*], which evaluated them and kept] 979 of them, among them the historic cauldron (*kazan*) of the *tarikat*. The books of the *Tekke* were sent to the Ankara General [i.e., National] Library"⁴¹⁷. Some items were also sent to the Ethnography Museum in

⁴¹⁴ Aşkar 2000, 158-9.

⁴¹⁵ Hülya Küçük 2002, 44.

⁴¹⁶ Birge 1937, 79.

⁴¹⁷ Mirmiroglou 1940, 359.

Ankara⁴¹⁸. It is interesting that this national museum was officially created on Nov 15, 1925⁴¹⁹, just two weeks before the introduction of Law 677.

In our opinion, the issue of the *hâne-tekke* constitutes a key interpretative parameter regarding the Kemalist closure of the *tekkes*, which has gone unnoticed in the relevant literature. One of the most important developments was the gradual ascendance of the *hâne-tekke* (house-*tekke*) model⁴²⁰, which essentially meant the transfer of *tarikats* activities to the *şeyhs*' houses. This concerned especially the *Bektaşîyye* and the *Nakşibendiyye*. From the reactions of these two *tarikats* to Law 677, we understand that the differentiation between, on the one hand, Kemalism and the *Bektaşîyye*, and on the other hand, the *Nakşibendiyye*, was essentially based on incommensurable understandings of modernisation and religion. In contrast to the *Bektaşîyye*, the Indian/Pakistani-originated *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddidiyye* and, especially, its *Hâlidiyye* sub-branch continued and increased their violent opposition to the Roman Kemalist Republic's *laik*-religious policies. While the presence of *tasavvuf*-related entities was such that, as for example Kılıç tells us, "in 1925 almost 90% of Istanbul's Muslim population was related to some form of a *tekke* in one way or another with about 400 officially registered and almost 450 unofficial '*tekkes*'"⁴²¹, almost all the revolts against the Turkish Republic during the Kemalist period (up to 1938) were *Nakşibendiyye*-related⁴²². While it is clear here that the substratum of the conflict between the *Nakşibendiyye* and Kemalist state was largely 'non-Roman Indian/Pakistani against Roman Ottoman/Turkish Islam', yet and most importantly vis-à-vis the nature of Islam in Turkey, it should be noticed also that both sides possessed a *tasavvufî* understanding of Islam. Together with the Şeyh Sait Rebellion, the 1931 Menemen Incident constituted the apex of *Nakşibendiyye*-led counter-revolutionary activity. In the latter case, the incident resulted in the death of a teacher and reserve officer, Mustafa Fehmi Kubilay (of a Muslim refugee family from Crete) and two watchmen (*bekçi*), Hasan and Şevki, who tried to help him escape a *Nakşibendi*-led group. Atatürk's account of the Kemalist leadership's deliberations on how to deal with the Menemen Incident are revealing,

⁴¹⁸ Noyan (Dedebaba) 1998, 452.

⁴¹⁹ http://www.ankara.gov.tr/turkce/konu_detay.aspx?uid=63, accessed December 14, 2009.

⁴²⁰ Yücer 2003, 856.

⁴²¹ Prof. Mahmud Erol Kılıç in the *Öteki Gündem* newsprogram on "İslam Geleneğinde Tasavvuf [Tasavvuf in the Islamic Tradition]" (Aug 20, 2010, Habertürk tv-station) [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tkoe06_069c, accessed August 21, 2010].

⁴²² Gölpınal 1997, 219.

because they show the extent to which the *Nakşibendis* were identified as the source of all violent opposition to the reforms:

- [General Kâzım (Özalp):] The make-up of the *Nakşibendis* is political. All the revolts originated with this movement. Abdulhamid was one of them too. The protagonists of old revolts were all *Nakşibendis*. ... after the closure of the *tekkes* [the *Nakşibendiyye*] developed into a religiously political reactionary movement (*irtica hareketi*). These are their historical traditions. Their [illegal] *tekkes* must be either converted into schools or burned down. ...
- [Şükrü Kaya:] The ones who butchered our soldiers in the Bayburt revolt were *Nakşibendis*. [Şeyh] Vahdeti in the 31 March Event was a *Nakşibendi* too.
- [General Kâzım (Özalp):] They took part in the revolts of Bitlis and Bozkır revolt as well.
- [Atatürk:] The commanders must know that this *tarikât* will be exterminated, to search for political connections.
- [General Kâzım (Özalp):] This *tarikât* is a harmful snake; it must be destroyed.
- [Atatürk:] There must be no place left for their Poles (*kutubs*) and Pole of Poles (*kutbül aktâb*)⁴²³.

Note how Atatürk uses Melami terminology in his description of the *Nakşibendi Şeyhs* – the *Nakşibendiyye* has no *kutub*-titling.

In an essentially similar spirit to the treatment of the *Bektaşîyye*, the Konya *Mevlevihâne* was turned into a museum in 1926. During his visit to the Konya *Mevlânâ Âsitâne* on March 20, 1923, Atatürk described Konya “one of the main sources of Turkish civilisation, and as the heart of the light which has been lasting *for centuries*”⁴²⁴. According to İsmail Hakkı Tekçe⁴²⁵, while visiting Konya in 1931, about six years after the closure of the *tekkes*, Atatürk accepted the invitation of the Mevlevi dervishes to attend

⁴²³ Atatürk'ün Bütün Eserleri 2008, 394-6, referring to: Altay, Fahrettin (1970), *10 Yıl Savaş 1912-1922 ve Sonrası* [10 Years of War: 1912-1922 and After], İnsel Yayınları, 433 – 440, and, *Türk Parlamento Tarihi TBMM – III. Dönem 1927-1931, c.1* [The (official) History of TBMM – III Period 1927-1931, vol. 1], Hazırlayan: Öztürk, Kâzım [(ed.)] (1995), *Türk Parlamento Tarihi Araştırma Grubu, Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Vakfı Yayınları*, Ankara, 479-482. İnönü also mentions an increased cooperation between Armenians and *şeyhs* in the area [ibid].

⁴²⁴ Hülya Küçük 2003, 205, emphasis ours.

⁴²⁵ İsmail Hakkı Tekçe (d. 1973) was a person very close to Atatürk. He was with Atatürk on his voyage to Samsun in 1919. After the War he served as commander of the ‘Protection Regiment’, i.e., Atatürk’s personal guard. He accompanied Atatürk in almost all his trips.

their ceremonies, which he watched with great attention and admiration. He was particularly affected, as were all of the audience, by a chanter of Mevlevi hymns "... in a dim and mystical atmosphere ... Leaving the Mevlevi Hall after the service was finished, Atatürk said: 'What a shame that we closed these institutions and places of worship. Yet we did it for a purpose. We did it in order to save the helpless citizens from the ignorant religious persons who deceived the people. If every religious movement had possessed such exalted aims, would we then have closed down the *tekkes*? [A]fterwards he sent a telegraph from Konya [Feb 21, 1931] to Prime Minister İnönü, saying: 'It is necessary to protect and maintain our antiquities and civilisational [elements] in every part of our country. There is a need for experts who will restore these monuments. When necessary, the Ministry of Education must send students abroad to get educated in how to carry out this work''⁴²⁶. Aiming to show Atatürk's continuous yet mono-dimensional relation to the *Mevleviyye* as opposed to the *Bektaşîyye*⁴²⁷, and using Gölpınarlı (1953) as her source, Hülya Küçük points out that Atatürk remained in contact with the son and successor of Abdülhalim Çelebi (d. 1925), Bakır Çelebi, whose help he enlisted on the issue of Hatay⁴²⁸. What once again Hülya Küçük omits is that Abdülhalim Çelebi – if not also Bakır Çelebi – belonged to the *Şems* (Bektashi/Alevi) branch of the *Mevleviyye* – something that Gölpınarlı makes abundantly clear⁴²⁹.

As for the '*tarikât*' of the *Kutbs*, the Kemalist Republic never banned the *vahdet-vücut Melamiyye*. The issue first arose during the early years of İnönü's presidency. Very late in 1943, the Presidency/Directorate of

⁴²⁶ Tekçe in Yurdakul 1999, 126.

⁴²⁷ Atatürk's entourage included many Bektashi persons like, for example, Dr Hasan Ragıp Erensel (Baba) who served as his personal doctor until his death (Noyan (Dedebaba) 2003, 141-144). There was also, at least at times, a Bektashi presence at his famous dinner tables (a kind of symposia in which religious, philosophical and political policy matters were usually discussed), as the case of Ali Nutki Baba (Nur Baba) and Haydar Naki Baba shows (Borak 2002, 90-93 and Noyan (Dedebaba), 29-39). It seems that their participation took place in late 1922. In fact, this is a very interesting case, since Ali Nutki Baba and his Bektashi *tekke* (Çamlıca Bektaşî Dergâhı) had been the subject of the well-known novel of a leading Kemalist, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, *Nur Baba* (1922), which showed the (supposedly) debased and backward state of this Bektashi *tekke* and Bektashism in general. In fact, Karaosmanoğlu had become a Bektashi via Ali Nutki Baba. From these dinner discussions it is clear not only that Atatürk disagreed with Karaosmanoğlu's portrayal of the *Bektaşîyye*, but also that he eventually appointed the two Bektashi Babas to local low official positions.

⁴²⁸ Hülya Küçük 2003, 206.

⁴²⁹ Gölpınarlı 1953, 229 and 240.

Religious Affairs replied to the inquiries about the issue of Melamism sent by the Public Prosecutor's Office of the Heavy Sentences Court in Kocaeli (Note 1254, 13/12/1943). The reply was based on the decisions of the Consultative Committee on Affairs (*Keyfiyet Müşavir Heyeti*) of the Presidency (Decision 151, 29/12/1943) as they read:

... According to the original sources relating to *tasavvuf*, the Melamis are concerned with the esoteric (*batın*) and do not stress the outer (*zahir*). The *Sufis* are concerned with both the exoteric and the esoteric. As for the Melamis, it is not the exoteric but the esoteric of the canon law (*şerî âdabı*) that they cherish. In other words, the Melamis have *zikr* and *fikir* ('thought'). They do not have dervish headgear (*taç*), robes (*hırka*), *zaviyes*, *tekkes* and *ayins* ('ceremonies')... The dervish headgear, the title '*şeyh*', the robe, and the title *halif* [should this be *halife*?] are [mere] symbols (*remiz*). So during the last century the basis founded by the Arab *hoca* and *şeyh* Muhammed Nur ül-Arabi, the path (*meslek*) of *tasavvuf*, philosophy, thought and conversation based on Muhiddin-i Arabi's theory of *vahdet-i vücud*,... took the name Melamism. This path (*meslek*) consists of degrees of understanding of Muhiddin-i Arabi's Sufi (*Sofilik*) philosophy, the theory of *vahdet-i vücud* with the concepts of *tevhid-i efal*, *tevhid-i sıfat*, and *tevhid-i zat*⁴³⁰. For this reason, Melamism is not a proper *tarikats*, and there is no official diploma (*icazetname*). Şeyh Muhammed Nur ül-Arabi received a diploma from the *Nakşibendiyye* and *Halvetiyye tarikats*. There are no *zaviyes*, *tekkes* or *dergâhs* peculiar to Melamis. No *şeyh* positions or *tekkes* carrying this name [Melami] are to be seen among the *tarikats*, *şeyh* positions and *tekkes* explicitly declared to us by the *Meclis-i Meşayih*. Melamism is a conversation path (*sohbet tariki*). Its conversations are not secret. They converse in coffee houses, small mosques and rooms, and non-Melamis too participate in these dialogues. In these conversations, there are no particular religious ceremonies/music and procedures...⁴³¹.

This document confirms that the Kemalist Republic was fully inter-encapsulating with Roman *batını vahdet-i vücud* theophosophy but not with the *tarikats* as potentially divisive organisational ummas in the Gökalpian sense. It is important to notice that, while in the pre-modern communities-based Ottoman Empire the functions performed by the *tarikats* in cooperation with the state in general included a variety of religious, judicial, administrative, educational, military, economic and

⁴³⁰ For the three levels of *tevhid* (recognition of unity) which constitute the *telos* of *tasavvuf* see Noyan (Dedebaba) 1999, 173-176.

⁴³¹ Kara 2002, 205-206, emphasis ours.

social tasks⁴³² (including providing a network of social security for the poor, widows and orphans, provision of medical services, partial tax-collection, library services, and even sport activities⁴³³), in modernity most of those functions came under the prerogative of the national secular unitary state by ideological default. Interestingly, part of the traditional functions of the abolished *tekkes* were taken on by the *People's Houses* (*Halk Evleri*) officially established on February 2, 1932 during Dr Reşit Galip's term in the Ministry of National Education with the aim of - as CHF's Secretary General, Recep Peker (Bektashi⁴³⁴) stated - "organizing the nation into a body of a people sharing the same conscience, being bound by the same ideal, and with mutual love and understanding for one another"⁴³⁵. The People's Houses developed programs on social assistance, educational classes, fine arts, library and publications, sports, and village development. Relating to the principle of 'populism' (*halkçılık*), the concept of the *People's Houses* is seen as relating to Gökalp's idea and efforts in the CUP to resurrect a modernised version of the Roman *Ahilik* (*Ahiyyân-ı Rum*), the *fütüvvet* 'organisation' of the 14th century Anatolia⁴³⁶ (the later as discussed in Chapter 2).

From the application of Law 677, we understand that in general, as long as the various *şeyhs* remained within the boundaries of the religious, the Kemalist stated allowed them to continue their teaching and religious practices – as, for example, the case of the *Kadiriyye* shows. One of the most important *Kadiri* personalities widely respected within Ottoman-Turkish *tasavvuf* was the head of the *Kadirihâne*, Şeyh İsmail Gavsî (Erkmenkul) (d. April 17, 1958), the father of Misbah (Erkmenkul) Efendi. Şeyh İsmail Gavsî (Erkmenkul) was the head of the *Kadiriyye* in Istanbul during the closure of the *tekkes* in 1925. It is important to note that Şeyh İsmail Erkmenkul remained in his post fully executing his religious *tasavvuf* duties until his death in 1958⁴³⁷ (and possibly receiving his salary from the state). In the words of Misbah (Erkmenkul) Efendi, "*Atatürk bize dokunmamış, yani babamın dokunmamış* [Atatürk did not interfere with us, i.e., he did not do anything to my father]"⁴³⁸. In other words, Atatürk permitted the

⁴³² Özdemir 1994, 305. For a detailed analysis of the different functions of *tasavvuf*, see, for example, Ergin 1939, 192 -209; Kara 1990; Özdemir 1994; and Cebecioglu 2000.

⁴³³ On the subject of 'sports tekkes' see Ergin 1939, 194-7, and, Bilge 1986.

⁴³⁴ Koca 2001.

⁴³⁵ Özancun 1996, 88.

⁴³⁶ Çeçen 2000, 46.

⁴³⁷ İşli, Hayri 1997, 253.

⁴³⁸ Conversations with author (August 2003).

Kadiriyye to operate without any obstacles even after the official closure of the *tekkes*. This becomes even more interesting since, according to *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* (Sep 24, 1925), “the dominant *tarikât* in Istanbul was the *Kadiriyye*; followed in degree of order by the *Rifaiyye*, *Nakşibendiyye*, *Halvetiyye*, *Şabaniyye*, *Sünbülîyye*, *Celvetiyye*, and *Bektaşîyye*”⁴³⁹.

Roman Islam as the Turkish National Religion

The apex of Kemalist national religious re-establishment commenced on Jan 22, 1932, which was the beginning of Ramazan. As Cündioğlu shows, this was the culminating point of a path which was based on Gökalp’s *Türkçülüğün Esasları* [The Principles of Turkism] (1923), reaching Dr Reşit Galip’s *Müslümanlık: Türk’ün Milli Dini* [Islam: The National Religion of the Turks] (1931-2) via İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu’s *Türk İnkılâbı Karşısında Müslümanlık* [Islam in the Face of the Turkish Revolution] (1928)⁴⁴⁰. It was also intrinsically related to the relevant initiatives (*hutbes*, etc) taken under the direction of *DİR*.

The 1932 policy of *Islam as the Turkish national religion*, which aimed to introduce the Turkish language into all parts of the Islamic liturgy (*namaz*, *ezan*, etc) was based on the thesis of Dr Reşit Galip (1893-1934), with the personal intellectual and political support of Atatürk himself⁴⁴¹. It was to be actualised within the non-delimiting confines of Roman Islam. It related neither to a return to pre-Islamic Türkmen Shamanism nor to a Protestant-like Reformation. Atatürk’s reply to someone’s suggestion that the Turkish national religion was Shamanism, the prayers of which were all in Turkish, is revealing:

Idiot! Islam is the national religion of the Turks too. It was the Turks that spread Islam, and they understood and appropriated it in its broadest sense and in their own way. Yet the degenerate mind of the religious fanatics (softa) refused to see it as the national religion of the Turks. It is necessary to give Islam its required meaning in the sight of the Turkish nation⁴⁴².

In August 1933, at the end of a dinner discussion on Protestantism and Shah Akbar’s religious movement in India, Atatürk said:

⁴³⁹ Küçük, Hülya 2003, 60.

⁴⁴⁰ Cündioğlu 1998, 32 -68.

⁴⁴¹ Cündioğlu 1998, 68. For Reşit Galip’s full text, see Cündioğlu 1999, 254-262.

⁴⁴² Cündioğlu 1998, 191, quoting Münir Hayri Engeli.

Let us drink a toast together! ... Let me inform you: *I will not become Luther! ... Not a bit like Shah Akbar!* Because Luther and Shah Akbar painted Europe and India with blood. I am [simply] fulfilling what Our Religion says. I am neither Luther nor Shah Akbar! My religion is Islam! I am [simply] looking at whatever the Koran says...⁴⁴³.

The religious understanding which the policy of *Islam as the Turkish national religion* represented was nothing else than the *vahdet-i vücud* Roman Turkish Islam. While Reşit Galip's argument on the 'Turkishness' of the Prophet Muhammed is partially based on a genealogical connection to the Prophet Ibrahim (whom he takes to be of Sumerian origins (i.e., a (proto-)Turk), his real Turkishness lies in the fact that he is the founder of true Islam. It is, above all, in this sense that Reşit Galip states that: "Despite their Arab names, Ibn Sina, Ibn Ruşd, Al-Gazali and Ibn Arabi were Turks"⁴⁴⁴, above all theophilosopically. Irrespective of the terminology, it is easy to witness again the presence of the continuum of Greek philosophy (particularly Aristotle), pre-*vahdet-i vücud* and *vahdet-i vücud* in the minds of the Kemalists – and this is a very Roman understanding. For Reşit Galip and Atatürk, true Islam is the *vahdet-i vücud* Turkish Islam: "*Tasavvuf* was born out of the revolt of Turkish wisdom against the scholastic Islamic *medrese*. The Turks, who were used to broad thinking and debate, instilled into Islam wider possibilities for debate. All the first *tasavvufi* personalities were Turks"⁴⁴⁵. Reşit Galip differentiates the period of the degeneration and Arabisation of Islam (the *fetva*-based period) from the Prophet Muhammed's original Islam, and links it to the adoption of what he terms "Byzantine and Roman methods"⁴⁴⁶. The Turkish people revolted against Arabisation and "the real Turkish scholars tried to give Islam a new life in the *tekkes*"⁴⁴⁷. The question here is: who were these "true Turkish scholars" and which periods does this concern? From Reşit Galip's choice of personalities and politico-religious trends we understand that he has in mind the period between the 12th and 15th centuries as well as the late Ottoman Empire. The figures he dwells on start with Ahmed Yesevi in the 12th century, followed by Sultan Veled (the founder of the Bektaşî/Alevî *Şems* branch of the *Mevlevîyye*), Hacı Bektaş Veli (the founder of the *Bektaşîyye*), Hacı Bayram-ı Veli (the founder of the *Bayramîyye*), and, above all, the early 15th-century Süleyman Çelebi (author of the *Mevlid*) – all of whom wrote in

⁴⁴³ Atatürk, in Bozdağ 1999c., 238, emphasis in original.

⁴⁴⁴ Reşit Galip in Cündioğlu 1999, 260.

⁴⁴⁵ Reşit Galip in Cündioğlu 1999, 259.

⁴⁴⁶ Reşit Galip in Cündioğlu 1999, 260.

⁴⁴⁷ Reşit Galip in Cündioğlu 1999, 261.

Turkish⁴⁴⁸. Despite appearances, it can be argued that Reşit Galip confirms the complete correlation between Turkishness and true Romanity. Firstly, the periods which Reşit Galip negatively refers to as being 'Byzantine and Roman', were, as we have seen, the most de-Romanised periods in Roman 'Byzantine' history. And, secondly, the *Mevlid* (a liturgical hymn read when a baby becomes forty days old, on the fortieth day after a death, during a marriage ceremony, at circumcision, etc) was clearly an Ottoman assimilation of the pre-existing Roman Christian tradition⁴⁴⁹. Indeed, the Islam of the Kemalist Republic was the *vahdet-i vücud* Islam; nationally Turkish, ecumenically Roman. And it was the Republic's duty to "bring this Islam into a comprehensible form for the Turkish people. [Because] human beings cannot live in irreligion. ... The Turkish nation too must appropriate its national religion. This is an absolute necessity for Turkish nationalism"⁴⁵⁰. The four-point plan prepared personally by Atatürk and Reşit Galip stipulated the following:

- a. It will be proved that Islam is a Turkish religion.
- b. In religion, prayer is the heart-based connection between God and His servant ('believer').
- c. When in prayer, the servant must address his/her God from his/her heart. And the language of the heart is the mother tongue. Human beings express the highest/most beautiful of their feelings in their mother tongues. It is for this reason that prayer must be performed in one's mother tongue. This idea will be defended and debated.
- d. After agreement on this idea [(point c.)] is established, a policy for the 'Turkification of Prayers' will be applied⁴⁵¹.

According to his relative Ahmet Fuat Bulca, at one point Atatürk compared Ottoman/Turkish Islam, Christianity and Judaism, with Arab Islam and Catholic Christianity in the following manner:

The religious beliefs of [the Rumelian-Anatolian Christians and Jews], are much closer to ours [i.e., Turkish Islam] than they are to those of the Catholic Christians of Lebanon who bear Muslim names... At least they have remained more connected to the ONE GOD ... It is clear that we are the most

⁴⁴⁸ Reşit Galip in Cündioğlu 1999, 261.

⁴⁴⁹ Öktem 1995, 70.

⁴⁵⁰ Reşit Galip in Cündioğlu 1999, 262.

⁴⁵¹ Cündioğlu 1998, 76.

genuine Muslims in the world. When we save our nation from that Arab [way of] worship, we will be more heart-based/genuine (*kalbî*) Muslims⁴⁵².

On Atatürk's orders and under his supervision, the constitutive parts of the policy of *Islam as the Turkish national religion* (the *ezan* in Turkish, Süleyman Çelebi's *Mevlid* and parts of the Turkish translation of the Koran) were implemented in various mosques, and also on state radio, during the 1932 Ramazan. One of the leading Kemalists, Falih Rıfkı Atay, explains why this policy was not brought to its logical conclusion:

In essence, Kemalism is a great and principle-based religious reform... Atatürk had started the revolutionary measures relating to the Turkification of worship with the *ezan* and the *namaz*. Indeed, his first command was the Turkification of the *ezan* and the *namaz*. But İnönü, who acted as the spokesman of the conservatives, begged him 'let us first Turkify the *ezan*, and then the *namaz*'. After the problems relating to language and the Koranic text, the Turkification of the *namaz* fell behind. There can be no doubt that if Atatürk had not fallen terminally ill, the reforms on worship would have been finished⁴⁵³.

It is of interest to note that for political reasons the relations between İnönü and Reşit Galip were not harmonious – Reşit Galip had become Minister of Education in 1932 by Atatürk's choice despite İnönü's opposition⁴⁵⁴. It may be that Reşit Galip, who had been raised in the "free environment" of the island of Rhodes, was "a revolutionary to his bones"⁴⁵⁵, in contrast to İnönü's conservatism. And it may also be, as Şevki Koca asserts, that "he was of Melami origin (*Melami kökenli*)"⁴⁵⁶. Finally, according to Noyan (Dedebaba), not long before Atatürk fell ill, he had asked the son of Hacı Hüseyin Mazlumi Baba (a personal friend of Atatürk and former MP for Denizli), Mümtaz Bababalım Baba, to prepare a regulations booklet for the re-opening of the Bektashi *tekkes*⁴⁵⁷.

Finally, "the continuation of the ceremonies and holidays relating to Ramazan, and to the *Kurban* and *Şeker* religious festivals [and] the Turkification of the Koran and the *ezan* showed the value of religion, which

⁴⁵² Kutay 1998, 124.

⁴⁵³ Atay 1998, 393-4.

⁴⁵⁴ Kılıç 2005, 289 – 298.

⁴⁵⁵ Oruç 2007, 52, 48, and 33.

⁴⁵⁶ Şevki Koca's letter to the author dated Nov 11, 2001 (21 *Recep-Hicri* 1422).

⁴⁵⁷ Noyan (Dedebaba) 2003, 63. Noyan presents this story simply as a piece of history based on Mümtaz Bababalım Baba's narration and does not purposely relate it to any future agenda for the re-opening of the Bektashi *tekkes*.

at the same time was included in the principles of the Turkish revolution as a national public institution”⁴⁵⁸.

Indeed, *the Kemalist official restoration of vahdet-i vücud Islam is the Lydian stone of true Ottoman-ness.*

Conclusions

In this book we are not concerned with changes in and challenges to Kemalist *laiklik* that occurred under Atatürk’s successor İnönü and the multi-party regime that has been in place since the late 1940s. But there is a certain degree of consensus about the extent to which *laiklik* proved acceptable to the Turkish people. Tezel, who talks of some significant opposition to the Kemalist project, states that “it was implemented with the enthusiastic support of the clear majority of the urban population”⁴⁵⁸. Aybars concludes “[t]here was no reaction against the various revolutionary reforms (*inkılaplar*) from the village people”⁴⁵⁹. As Landau states, “religious and ethnic minorities in the republic wholeheartedly supported governmental measures to foster a civil society, and the *dönmes* were dedicated partisans of secularism”⁴⁶⁰. As far as *laiklik* is concerned, Toprak states that even today “there is no contradiction between Islam and secularism in the minds of most Turks, ... In this sense, one could talk of a special kind of 'syncretism' between Kemalism and Islam ...”⁴⁶¹. Mango most aptly describes the arrangements as “Islam-within-secularism” – a situation that he describes as “illogical in theory but viable in practice”⁴⁶². Yet it was viable in theory too, precisely because it was based on the Turkish-language-centred *batıni vahdet-i vücud* ‘Sunni’ and ‘Shii’ Islamic part of Romanity.

Kemalism was a national-religious revolution in a society based on the model of the person (individual and social at the same time) who possesses self-authority. It used authoritarian measures in order to save the Turkish people from the true authoritarianism of the neo-Frankish reductionist economy-based international capitalism-liberalism, from communism and from Oriental Islamism. All of these ideologies deprive human beings of their natural self-authority, granting them only free will. It is significant that the notion of Atatürk as an individual dictator was primarily propagated by the British Officer H.C. Armstrong, who worked in intelligence in Istanbul against the Turkish national movement in 1922-1923. It is indicative that

⁴⁵⁸ Tezel 2001.

⁴⁵⁹ Aybars 1998, 407.

⁴⁶⁰ Landau 2007.

⁴⁶¹ Toprak 1987, 221.

⁴⁶² Mango 1999, 535.

Armstrong portrayed individualistic liberals such as Rafet, Rauf, etc, who essentially cooperated with the Islamists, as democratic. And it is also not accidental that Atatürk's fellow Romans were at the forefront of the Kemalist Revolution's defence, as, for example, Sofia Spanoudi - a personal friend of the Roman Greek patriots Ion Dragoumis and Athanasios Nikolaidis-Souliotis - who stated in the Greek daily *Proia*: "[Armstrong's book, *Grey Wolf*,] is a monument of ill will, total hostility and slanders here and there. Yet it is certain that it cannot deny the revolutionary reforms, innovations and military genius of your leader [i.e., Atatürk]"⁴⁶³.

In a Europe dominated by Italian Fascism, German Nazism and Soviet Communism, the Kemalist regime was not a dictatorship. As Mahmut Esad Bozkurt stated: "Communism is based on the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Turkish regime rejects dictatorships of all sorts." "National Socialism is Hitler's dictatorship. The Turkish regime does not accept individual dictatorship; it is based on the [idea] of national sovereignty." "The [Italian] Fascist regime ... is a dictatorship. It does not conform to the Turkish regime in this respect"⁴⁶⁴. The Greek journalist Thomas Vaidis stated in 1936: "Do not try to compare the Kemalist dictatorship with any other European dictatorship. Kemalism is neither Fascism nor Hitlerism"⁴⁶⁵. After his personal meeting with Atatürk on May 16, 1930, the archaeologist Hans Henning von der Osten wrote: "there is no sign of the autocrat in Gazi Mustafa Kemal Paşa..."⁴⁶⁶. It should not be forgotten also that, contrary to the political trends in Europe, in which real dictatorships, like Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and the Stalinist Soviet Union were on the rise, Atatürk attempted - albeit unsuccessfully - to establish both a liberalism-oriented second party, the *Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası* (Free Republican Party), and a leftist-oriented entity, the *Kadro Hareketi* (Kadro Movement). Today's similar attacks on Atatürk's - in reality, Roman 'Byzantine'-Ottoman - heritage atavistically resurface from the deadly intellectual pair Frankish Liberalism-Oriental Islamism⁴⁶⁷ as heirs of Frankish Carolingian

⁴⁶³ Spanoudi in Borak 2000, 84.

⁴⁶⁴ Bozkurt 2003/1940, 193-4.

⁴⁶⁵ Vaidis 2002, 129.

⁴⁶⁶ Osten 1933, 56.

⁴⁶⁷ The latest of these attacks from Western Liberal quarters is Stefan Ihrig's *Atatürk in the Nazi Imagination*. Cambridge, MA and London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014. Consistent Islamist campaigns against Atatürk can be found, for example, in the works of Necip Fazıl Kısakürek and Kadir Mısıroğlu. For a most informed and comprehensive countering of these attacks, see "*Cengiz Özakıncı ile Tarihin Bilinmeyen Yüzü* [*The Unknown Face of History with Cengiz Özakıncı*]."

echoes in history in various forms and via various institutions, a latest one being the Wellington House of Imperialist Liberal propagandists like James Bryce, Arnold Toynbee, and John Buchan, or figures like Mark Sykes.

The issue of authoritarianism in Kemalism can only be fully understood within the framework of a society based on social individuals (i.e., persons) possessing not only free will but also self-authority and the corresponding concept of an essentially moral national state. According to Mahmut Esat Bozkurt, one of its key practitioners, Kemalism was “an authority-based democracy that has its roots in the people. The Turkish nation resembles a pyramid, which has the people at its base, and at its top a head who comes from the people, who is called *şef* [leader]. The leader again takes his authority from the people. Democracy is nothing else but this...”⁴⁶⁸. In many respects, the Kemalist regime largely represents a modernised version of what Kitsikis terms ‘the Byzantine prototype of governance’, which was based not merely on Frankish-type of democracy but on democratic ‘*λαοκρατία*’(‘people-cracy’). Kemalism contains the hierarchical inter-encapsulation of ‘morals-politics-economics’ which is a sub-set of its all-inclusive ideals-based hierarchical inter-encapsulation of the Gökaltanian ‘modernisation-nationalisation-Islamisation’ (the ‘civilisation-culture’ ideals).

As a reflection of the triadic ideal-based Kemalist order, *laiklik* in itself constitutes a hierarchical inter-encapsulation of ‘separation (intellect) - re-establishment (heart), and power-based control (body)’ reflecting the model of the Perfect Human Being (heart-intellect-body) with a renewed emphasis on the intellect-based national worldly. It was the emanation of the same Roman Reality, ‘the water’, yet this time, the ‘cup’ was painted in an intellect-dominated colour. And the water took the colour of the modern cup. As such, *laiklik* constitutes the ‘middle sinallilistic road’, lovingly accepting exclusively dualism-based realities (individualism, collectivism, capitalism-communism, Protestantism, Augustinian Catholicism, Islamism, etc) as long as they do not attempt to destroy the *sinallilistic* monism of the overall Kemalist moral order, which is the modern version of *Nizam-ı Âlem* within a worldly framework. As long as, that is, they do not attempt to establish an exclusively dualistic order and put under threat the overall harmony between individual-society, heart-mind, love-intellect, mind-body, love-power, love-intellect etc. It is within this framework that the control dimension as the lower part of *laiklik* operates, securing the

(Presented by Levent Yıldız) - YouTube, Accessed Aug 7, 2023. For a reply to Ihrig’s book, see Özakıncı, Cengiz. *Tarih Üzerinden Psikolojik Savaş ve Atatürk Dersi* [Psychological War through History and the Atatürk Lesson]. İstanbul: Otopsi Yayınları, 2021.

⁴⁶⁸ Uyar 2001, 215.

existence of both the other two, i.e., re-establishment and separation. As such, it is moderate and balanced - unlike its Western counterpart, secularism, the Frankish substratum of which, in order to effect separation, had to commit the ‘genocide of the religious’ - and basically eliminate ‘goods of value’, as opposed to ‘goods of instrumentality’, from the public space (privatisation). It is not accidental at all in showing the omphalic vein between Frankism and Turkish Islamism as well as the ignorance of the nature of Turkish *laiklik* and Western secularism in general that, for example, the leader of *Saadet Partisi*, Temel Karamollaoğlu was arguing that he prefers English to French secularism as, in his opinion, the first is much more moderate and peaceful towards religion compare to its aggressively anti-religious French counterpart, and, because the late Ottoman thinkers were close to French thought, they understood *laiklik* as something anti-religious. Of course, as it has been plainly evident, this is Islamist hearsay.⁴⁶⁹

Roman Turkish *laiklik* not only provided for a modern expression of the inter-encapsulation between ‘Sunni’ and ‘Shii’ (Bektashi/Alevi) Islam within the borders of the Republic but provided a roadmap for the whole Islamic world. Yet this represents only the Eastern head of the Roman *laik* bicephalous eagle. Through its other head, the Roman Greek *barzah*, it faced the West. Explaining the Greek-Turkish Friendship agreement to Penelope Delta, Venizelos stated on Nov 13, 1930: “... And now that religious fanaticism has been extinguished, there is no barrier left between us, [Greeks and Turks]”⁴⁷⁰. According to Kitsikis, in the 1930s, “[e]ncouraged by the remarkable consolidation of Greco-Turkish relations, many prominent Greeks even envisaged the foundation of a Greco-Turkish confederation”⁴⁷¹. It is not at all accidental that the theoretical archetype of *laiklik*’s modern counterpart in the modern Greek state, i.e., *ἐκκοσμίκευση* (worldisation, *dünyevileşmek*⁴⁷²) was a nationalised Roman Christian “*sinallilia*, that is to

⁴⁶⁹ Haber Global. “Temel Karamollaoğlu Atatürk Laikliği Yerine Neden İngiliz Tipi Laikliği Övdü? [Why Did Temel Karamollaoğlu Praise Secularism of the English Type in the Place of Atatürkist *Laiklik*?].” Interview by Jülide Ateş, July 2, 2020. Accessed November 10, 2023. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_LPBmDhDNko&t=77s (first seen in <https://gs.yandex.com.tr/video/preview/11304474532825170199>). Karamollaoğlu states that there is no Atatürk *laiklik* and the meaning of *laiklik* found in the Turkish Constitution is unknown.

⁴⁷⁰ Delta 2002, 171.

⁴⁷¹ Alexandris 1983, 181 (quoting Kitsikis).

⁴⁷² It is interesting that the roots of the Greek and Turkish words *ἐκκοσμίκευση* and *dünyevileşmek* are identical, i.e., *κόσμος* (cosmos) and *dünya* (world, cosmos). The

say mutual alliance and collaboration [between Church and State] in differentiated domains”⁴⁷³. Such was the Roman nature of the Kemalist revolutionary measures that some Roman Greek Christian religious functionaries, like the Rev. Filotheos Zervakos, thought that Atatürk and the Turks were ready to accept Roman Orthodox Christianity⁴⁷⁴ - reminding us of Saint Gregory Palamas’ similar perception in the 13th century⁴⁷⁵. In other words, the Kemalist Revolution religiously possessed the character of the ‘metadoxical’ inter-encapsulation between Orthodox Christianity and the *vahdet-i vücud* Islam of Romanity – with Roman (not Ashkenazi) Judaism as a progenitor and subcategory. And here, by the fact holy people of the *Ecclesia* of Christ had an inkling of the Roman substratum of the Turkish people, we see the depths of the folly and the enormous responsibility that the Orthodox Ecclesiastical authorities who cooperated heretically with the Frankish scheming and were urging for the total extermination of the Turkish people bear for the destruction of the Roman Greek population of Asia Minor. Before the occupation of Istanbul by the British in 1918, even the Freemasonry of Ottoman Empire had been related primarily to these religious understandings. It is not incidental that, just two years before his unexpected death, Atatürk had banned this later neo-Gnostic Frankish Freemasonry in 1935 as it was ‘fed from foreign sources’ (“*bunların kökü dışarıda!*”⁴⁷⁶ (*they have their roots abroad*)). Nor accidental the easiness by which Atatürk sent official delegations to Missolonghi on the anniversaries of the 1821 Roman Greek Revolution against the Mahmudian tyranny - such was the anxiety spread in Westerner circles for the Greek-Turkish rapprochement that when in such an event he saw the Turkish delegation led by Ambassador Enis Akaygen present, “the face of the British Ambassador went pale”⁴⁷⁷.

Although its nucleus lay around the primordial centre of Romanity, Greece and Turkey as the main body of the Roman bicephalous eagle, this

root of *laiklik* comes from the Greek work *λαϊκός* (*laikos*), which in the Roman framework means someone who is a Christian (‘worldly’ yet ‘religious’) but not a member of the official Church hierarchy (the ‘religious’). It is also most interesting that in Roman Christianity the ‘Orthodox monk is considered as *λαϊκός* (not as belonging to the official Church hierarchy).

⁴⁷³ Mayer 1999, 10, See also Kitsikis 2005 and Öktem 2002, 254-256. Indeed, in the discussion between Mayer and Öktem the latter basically recognises the sinallilistic aspect of what we have termed the Roman ‘Byzantine- Ottoman’ continuum.

⁴⁷⁴ Kitsikis 1996, 256.

⁴⁷⁵ Meyendorf 1963, 102.

⁴⁷⁶ Arvas 1964, 71-72.

⁴⁷⁷ Tulça 2003, 35.

movement extended beyond them. It initially concerned the immediate Roman lands, the ‘Balkans’. As Venizelos himself stated, “the Balkan Pact began with Greek-Turkish friendship”⁴⁷⁸. Yet its *telos* was the world at large, since it constituted an ecumenical prototype for Christian-Muslim relations, even in the modern national setting.

In the ecumenical sense, the Atatürk period intrinsically relates to the Roman ‘metadoxical’ period of Fatih Sultan Mehmed, a metadoxy that was based on the Roman Christiano-Islamity of the ‘Unity of Being’.

In November 1941 one of the key architects of the Roman Greek-Turkish Confederation, Ambassador Enis (Akaygen) Bey, sent a protest telegram to the President of the Turkish Republic, İsmet İnönü: “Do not do it. You will destroy in one day the achievements that Atatürk had effected with great effort”⁴⁷⁹. He was referring to the *Varlık Vergisi* (Wealth Tax), the first move to transform the non-Muslim communities from constitutive elements of the Kemalist Turkish nation (with their own largely free ethnic existence) into Frankish-style persecuted ‘minorities’. The Roman Greek Turkish MP Dr Taptas pointed out in an interview with *Ulus* that he did not represent an ethnic minority but the whole of the Turkish nation⁴⁸⁰. As noted above, a similar de-Romanising transformation had happened in the 19th century with the redefinition of Ottoman *millets* as ‘ethnic minorities’ tolerated by their Muslim master in place of their previous role as constitutive elements of the differentiatedly unitary Roman Ottoman polity. Like its predecessor, İnönü’s move was a clear sign of de-Romanisation, and consequently de-Kemalisation, despite the nominal references to Atatürk – a process which lasts conflictually to our days. It is not accidental that, even as late as 1998, old Roman Greek Istanbulites who had experienced Atatürk’s Revolution at first-hand and were forced to migrate to Greece by the post-Kemalist Westernist-Islamist Turkish regimes (Adnan Menderes, etc.) were openly declaring: “We are Kemalists”⁴⁸¹!

⁴⁷⁸ Kitsikis 1995, 31.

⁴⁷⁹ Tulça 2003, 98.

⁴⁸⁰ Alexandris 1983.

⁴⁸¹ I would like to thank Dr Irini Sarioglu for this reference, which is based on her PhD fieldwork (1998) in Palaio Faliro, Athens.

EPILEGOMENOUS PROLOGUE

Now, from the bottom up: in this book we set out to examine the nature and form of Turkish secularism (*laiklik*), as well the religious and worldly sources that shaped both this particular form of secularism and the Turkish secularisation process in general. From the top down: we did this within the framework of Ecumenical Romanity, as all these sources rise from that tradition and take Life from it. In this light, our discussion confirms the premise that the form of secularism which emerges as the result of the secularisation/modernisation process in a social milieu is dependent upon the pre-existing predominant type of religiosity of that milieu.

In the case of ouroborian life-experiences of Western milieus, the secularisation and modernisation process working and evolving historically from within and upon the Frankish Augustinian substratum shaped two conflicting ‘moral orders’: the religious universal, contemplative upper reason, combined with the sainthood-related upper will on the one hand and the worldly, human, singular, instrumental, lower reason, linked to the survival-related lower will, on the other; the final form of the latter is a moral setting of a ‘liberated’ nomadic individual of the laughable human state in which one fantasizes about having become an identity by merely assuming its exoteric appearance, i.e. ‘I fantasize, therefore I have become’. This pitiful ontological state has made this ‘liberated’ individual the most enslaved in human history for, having destroyed the similarly utterly enslaving Kantian morality of the categorical imperative (previously understood also as liberation), nothing can salvifically intermediate between the (pseudo)empowered-self and the more-empowered self of the one higher in the scale of power; add to this perpetual self-identifications (without recourse to *Supraness*) and life has become the *nihil* of non-existence, eternal damnation throwing you into the mouth of the beast; a one-way trip to the abyssal mouth of the Gnostic-Augustinian ouroboros: its head sealed by Western secularism (modern science, religiously secularized Gnosticism) formulated upon the pre-existing Augustinian theology, and its tail by classical Frankish Augustinian religiosity (Catholicism, Protestantism). This is the *ontology of the West*, its religion as well as its modern (religion of) secularism of the West.

The *Saeculum*-isation of Christianity in the West happened especially *via* what the Carolingian Franks perceived as ‘other-worldly’, or through

what their modern adherents call metaphysics... Worldlisation by way of metaphysics... For what the Franks took to be dualist metaphysics in matters pertaining to the relationship between God and the creation, the Christians consider, 'worldly' too:

There is no trace of such a distinction in the early Irish and Greek patristic traditions: nature and history, corporeal and spiritual — everything that is not God — constitute an inseparable created reality which is entirely dependent on Him. For the early Irish Christians, their understanding of the personal and directly-functioning omnipresence of God would make any distinction between natural and supernatural reality meaningless. The Celts saw the sovereignty, presence and glory of God in everything that He created¹.

You do not need the *nihil* of non-existence; you need the *Nihil* of the Non-Existence of uncreated *Supraness* Who will restore your life with all its faculties, agencies and powers to the Improperness of Life Proper. Going not only beyond the dualism of mind-body but beyond the (pseudo) monism of mind/spirit — for both are aeonian·ly deadly. This is the Road of Romanity, *autexousiotis*·ly sought and lived out by the human, Autexousiotis·ly and exclusively bestowed by God only. In the Roman Turkish and Greek cases, the formative substratum of secularism was comprised of the Islamic *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* and Orthodox Christianity respectively. The pre-modern, *sinallilia*-based and predominantly religious relations between the worldly and the religious (religious hierarchy) were inversed through secularisation into a modern and predominantly worldly framework.

At the core of the reality of the 'Byzantine'-Ottoman Continuum of ecumenical Romanity lies the historically actualised, theosophical commensurability between Roman Christianity and Islamic *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* as the predominant official religiosity of the Ottoman Empire, Rumelia and Anatolia in particular. A key word on the Roman Koranic *vahdet-i vücud* doctrine as Islam's highest state; one should understand what proceeded and what follows within the following framework: a. *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* Sufism, i.e., Roman Ottoman/Turkish Islam constitutes the closest existing living doctrine with regard to Christianity, i.e., Roman Orthodox Christianity — and, because *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* is not Christianity as such, it has the potential to become dangerous if not ontologically situated and practiced prudently. b. It occupies one existential level of being below Christianity. c. it conditionally pertains to *Supraness*. d. For these reasons, when God wills it to be so, it can inter-encapsulate with Christianity. e. It conditionally pertains to *oikonomia* in two functions:

¹ Hieromonk Chrysostomos of the Koutlounous Monastery/Koutlounousianos u.d.

oikonomia as a punishment for failing Christians, and/or, as a safety net, helper and springboard to Christianity for faithful Christians in difficult times: i.e., both for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ's *eudokia* Will and the struggling-in-Him people, f. Within this latter framework, *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* constitutes the highest and all-encompassing form within Islam g. otherwise, it doctrinally plunges into the Divine Will according to His receding allowance towards aeonian damnation along with the non-*Supraness*-related spiritual, intelligible or material entities.

We have traced the omphalic connection of the Seljuk and Ottoman polity to *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* as its predominant religiosity both state-wise and at the popular level; their inter-encapsulation with Roman Christianity and Roman Greek Christians both theologically and biologically:

If only to highlight differences and regional specificities, the circumstances and processes of Turkish settlement in the lands of Rum need to be compared to those in Iran, another realm where substantial Turcophone populations settled in the medieval era. Vladimir Minorsky, for instance, a modern historian of medieval Iran, tendentiously asserts, "Like oil and water, the Turcomans and the Persians did not mix" freely. The history of the lands of Rum clearly offers us images very different from oil and water and perhaps parallels the history of South Asia in the same period—a setting of mixture and exchange that included much more than two actors (Turks and Greeks, or Turcomans and Persians) and called for new terms of identity, such as Rumi²

(the prismatic Armeno-Graeco side of Romanity, the Roman Orthodox Christian, Hayhurums (Hay (Armenian), hu (and), and Rûm (Roman)) will be dealt elsewhere); along with the full Romanisation drive during the reign of the most enlightened of the Ottoman Sultans, the philosophically Aristotelian Christiano-Muslim, Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed; the gradual development of institutionalised *sinallilia*-based relations between the state and religious institutions in the framework of the *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* metadoxical phase of the Empire; the doctrinal-institutional consolidation and canonisation of the *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf sinallilia*-based model along new lines, which pertained to a Sunnisation trend connected, on the one hand, to the incorporation of Arab populations (with a rather exoteric-legalistic understanding of Islam) in the Empire, and, on the other, to a series of anti-Ottoman Alevi revolts in Anatolia, without change occurring in the essential nature of the overall predominant Ottoman religiosity, which continued to be Roman *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* in its Sunni and Bektashi/Alevi actualisations, differentiated but unified: "[i]n the Ottoman

² Kafadar 2007, 14.

world, Sufism and Islam were synonymous”³. The tears of those aulic ones who cry for what followed in the coming centuries concerning the Orthodox Christians after 1453, and meanwhile praise the last Palaiologans, are certainly crocodilian for while the Ottomans had effected a nominal degradation – which remained largely on paper until the direct Frankish intrusion in the Empire - what the last Catholico-Uniate Palaiologans had in store for Christ and His *Ecclesia* was extinction from the face of the earth by extermination as such and/or doctrinal-ecclesiastical corruption. It was during that time that a Frankish mode of conquest was set upon the dictum, ‘give away Christianity, get politicoeconomic rewards from the West’; this pattern will be reinvented in the form of the essentially Catholic-Protestant-inspired *Megali Idea* from the mid-19th century onwards in the newly established Frankish-governed Kingdom of Greece with its suppressive policies against the Orthodox Church, especially monasticism (a kind of Frankenstein-like resurrection of the late Palaiologism); and it will be intensively embraced from about 1911 onward, religiously after the fall of none other than the Roman Orthodox Patriarchate in Istanbul into the fold of Neo-Gnostic Ecumenism and, politically by almost all political factions in mainland Greece, above all the Venizelists, clients of the British neo-Gnostic Liberals of the time.

Early Ottoman modernity is largely another matter. As a result of increasing Frankish Western intrusion in the Empire, the genesis of religio-politically centrifugal Arab Wahhabism, along with the detrimental religio-political influence of the detrimented Petrine Russian from the mid-18th century onwards, brought de-Romanisation to the Ottoman Empire, especially at the elite level. Following in the Frankish footsteps that led to the Palaiologans’ betrayal against Romanity and Roman Orthodox Christianity before the 1453 Conquest, and then by the deceit of Tsar Peter I, a betrayal of Ottomanism and Turkism took place via the importation from India of a non-Roman understanding of Islam (yet still *tasavvufi*) represented by the *Nakşibendiyye-i Müceddiyye*, which took hold at the elite religious echelons of the state. Indeed, the anti-Orthodox Frankish Tzarist Petrine Russia, too, would inflict a heavy blow to Romanity (Christian and Islamic) that lasted until 1917, when destroyed (unconsciously) by the Bolshevik Revolution. Romanity would survive at an enormous human cost and with unspeakable sacrifices. Although Romanity was somehow preserved until about 1750 AD, what had started as a deviation from the Roman Ecumenical Islamic and Orthodox Christian Vision of Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmed by way of Sunnisation from the reign of

³ Bain 2001, 214.

Sultan Bayazid II would end in the fall and dismembering of the Empire during the reign of Mahmud II (r. 1808-1839 AD) – a trajectory that bears a resemblance, *mutatis mutandis*, with the de-Romanisation period of the 14th century of the Roman Empire that concluded with the fall of the Empire during the utterly anti-Roman reign of the apostate of Romanity and Roman Christianity, Constantine XI Dragasis Palaiologos – a fall that predates the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottomans. That is why it is the Franks and their descendants (bodily and/or spiritual) who lament his memory – all the while destroying Romanity wherever they have found it.

In this context, the Roman Greek Revolutionaries (from Rigas through the 1821 guerrilla leaders up to Prime Minister Kapodistrias) were fighting for the re-institutionalisation of Romanity, albeit in a predominantly Greek form – of course, they were conned by the Western Franks who soon established a German tyrant as the new Greek King. Their Roman modernist Turkish counterparts would emerge in different ideological forms (all organically *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* religiosities) from around the latter half of the 19th century onwards. We witness an evolution from the Ottomanism of the New Ottomans (Namık Kemal), through the initially constitutional 'Ottomanism' and later more Turkish-centred 'national' dimension of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), to fully-fledged Turkish national-*laik* Kemalism. While the CUP's Akbarian Gökâlp was, to a large extent, the ideological architect of the Kemalist Republic and *laiklik*, its final and actual form was provided by the Roman *tasavvufi* Atatürk and the Kemalist policy of 'Islam as the Turkish national religion' (along with the other relevant revolutionary reforms). It is surely no accident that, in the Republican context, Islam has been called *the sine qua non* of Kemalist Turkishness⁴. In our opinion, the restoration of *vahdet-i vücud* Islam as the central and highest form of religiosity of the Turkish Kemalist *laik* state constituted the greater, most revolutionary, and most traditionally organic religious link with the true Ottoman heritage. The Kemalist state and its proposed *laiklik* is far more religiously Ottoman than the de-Ottomanising post-mid-18th-century Ottoman state ever was – and even more so in comparison with the Ottoman Empire after Bayezid II. As a triadic *sinallilistic* conception based on unity(religion)-differentiation(reason)-power, Kemalist *laiklik* represents the re-establishment of Roman Islam as the 'Turkish national religion', the separation between the religious and the worldly, and the control required for safeguarding both re-establishment and separation. It constitutes an inversion of the classical Ottoman *sinallilia*-based 'religion' and 'state'

⁴ Çağaptay 2006, 162.

relations in terms of emphasis on the religious and the worldly (the second predominating in Kemalist *laiklik*).

Properly seen, Roman Christianity and Roman Islam are connected vessels. Historically, this was clearly expressed at the most critical point for Roman Christianity when Western powers brought it to the brink of extinction: with the formulation of the Roman Seljuks of Iconium in 1024; when the apostasy from a Christianity led by the fervently Francophile Constantine XI Dragasis Palaiologos in 1453 was such that the Hagia Sophia became a Catholic/Uniate Church, followed by the re-establishment and the restoration of Ecumenical Orthodox Christianity by Fatih Basileus Sultan Mehmet; in 1821 by the Roman Greek Revolution in-tandem with Roman Turkish forces (for the salvation of *vahdet-i vücud* Islam, too); and in 1922 when the mainly Roman Kemalist *vahdet-i vücud* Islamic forces and the Roman Greek people stopped the utterly and unrepentant Frankish Venizelist-Royal policies that aimed to destroy both Roman Orthodox Christianity and stop Roman Islam in its tracks. The main difference between 1453 and 1922 is that while in the former year we are talking about the punishment *and* restoration of Roman Christianity, i.e., it is the Divine Will according to *oikonomia* that operates; but in the latter year, the apostasy of Roman Greeks was such that we are in the realm of the Will according to His receding allowance (*παράχωρησις/parachorisis*):

To the angel of the church of Ephesus write... Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place - unless you repent... "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, 'These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of satan. Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death."⁵

And,

When He says, *I will remove your lampstand*, He means He will physically take it and move it elsewhere. The removal of the lampstand means to become separated of divine grace, according to Saint Andrew, to become bare, naked of God's [uncreated] grace... The removal of the lampstand can

⁵ The Apocalypse/Unveiling 2:1-11.

also mean the extinction of a relevant church, a reality that found its fulfilment in our century after one thousand nine hundred years of history for the seven churches in Asia Minor. These churches were indefinitely uprooted from the geographical space that they had occupied for one thousand nine hundred years. This particular threat from the Lord found its fulfilment in 1922, when the seven churches were erased from the face of the earth⁶.

In its proper form, Roman Christianity and Roman Islam constitute the two-heads of the bicephalous Roman Eagle. The adversary powers (visible and invisible) have been striving to separate the heads, to make them fight each other, to inflict internal strife within each head by corrupting its dogmas, to destroy the common body, and, above all, to erase its heart, the Theanthropic and True *Hakikat-i Muhammediyye* Who is Lord Jesus Christ: To attack Being itself.

The prerequisite for the creation of anthropos is the pre-existence of Theanthropos of Whom the Anthropos is the image and likeness. In other words, Anthropos is made in the Image and the Likeness of God - He/she is not made in the image and likeness of the Divine Essence, i.e., as God is in Himself. Otherwise,

...in the Western religious traditions and milieus, the ultimate God-Human encounter occurs supernaturally; in Christianity, it takes place non-placably and *Supra*-naturally, beyond both physics and metaphysics⁷.

Of course, in *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* the latter holds but only in *oikonomia* and exceptionally when God Wills it – and God can legitimately and enacted-ly will it so as we are in the epoch after His Incarnation, Passion, Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension, i.e., Him having 'undone' the core of the Ancestral Sin, human nature can now legitimately visit *Supraness*. Thus, the Image according to Whom the human being is made predates the human being in existence. God as Divine Essence sees Himself in Him. So, He is in the Archē in absolute, pre-aeonian terms. The Lord Jesus Christ: Facing both the divine Essence and the Cosmos; the Darkness of the Divine Nature and the radiant Eastern Front in the Sunrise of the Cosmos out of the abyss of non-being. He was there in the beginning as well as at the *Archē*. Both Uncreated by nature as begotten, i.e., from the same essence – and created as a man:

⁶ Archimandrite Athanasios Mtilinaios 2016/2021 (Lesson 10, Revelation 2:4-7, January 11, 1981).

⁷ Retoulas 2022, 9-10.

The Lord *created me* as the beginning of his ways, for the sake of his works. Before the present age he founded me, in the beginning. Before he made the earth and before he made the depths, before he brought forth the springs of the waters, before the mountains were established and before all the hills, he begets me... when he made strong the foundations of the earth, *I was beside him, fitting together*; it is I who was the one in whom he took delight. And each day I was glad in his presence at every moment, when he rejoiced after he had completed the world and rejoiced among the sons of men⁸.

The Master-Builder:

Thus he showed me: and, behold, the LORD stood upon a wall and made a plumbline, with a plumbline in his hand⁹.

Later becoming in the flesh as the son of a carpenter/mason, Joseph.

In the beginning[/Archē] was the Word [(Logos)], and the Word [(Logos)] was with God, and the Word [(Logos)] was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made¹⁰.

Or, in His own words on earth:

...for without Me you can do nothing¹¹.

I and *My* Father are one.¹²

And what did He mean by this?

Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him... The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God."¹³

The other Paraclete, the God-Holy Breath/Spirit (Πνεῦμα):

⁸ Proverbs 8:22-31 (in Pietersma 2007, 629, translated by Johann Cook), emphasis added.

⁹ ‘Amnos 7:7.

¹⁰ John 1:1-3.

¹¹ John 15:5.

¹² John 10:30.

¹³ John 10:31-33.

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you¹⁴. ... But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.¹⁵ Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you¹⁶.

As Rumi says,

In the fire of the Divine love, behold I saw a whole universe. Each particle there possessed Jesus' Breath¹⁷.

Now, those 'Christians' who attack the Muslims for not accepting the Theanthropic of the Lord Jesus Christ should first look at their own mirror for it is not without a cause when Saint Justin (Popović) of Chelije (1894 - 1979 AD) aptly writes:

Arianism [(, i.e., accepting Jesus as merely a man)] has not been buried as yet. ... If you look at the culture of Europe in its deep [sense], you will see Arianism lying hidden there: ... they have belittled the very Theanthropic Christ to the dimension of a man. Both the philosophy, and the science, and partially the religion of Europe are kneaded with the dough of Arianism¹⁸.

Note here that the West is the nest of similar movement that now opposes Turkish Alevism, under the banner '*Alisiz Alevilik*' (Alevism without Ali).

A common mark of Western Frankish mockery against the Roman Empire ('Byzantium') was that it busied itself with strange theological questions, e.g., the sexes of angels, etc. rather than focus on military, economic and other mundane endeavours. How strange is this; indeed, for if the Romans wondered whether angels possess a certain sex or none or both - a question perfectly legitimate from the point of view of a human being - it is indeed the modern neo-Gnostic West that has come to such a state as to now question whether human beings themselves possess one sex or another, a question which originates from the fallen spirits.

Ey Mümin!! You chastise us for idolatry when we say God is One in Three. But then you say: God is One!!! Is God as such then defined by

¹⁴ John 14:26.

¹⁵ John 15:26

¹⁶ John 16:7.

¹⁷ Rumi's *Masnawi* (line 794) in Sorkhabi 2008, 25.

¹⁸ Popović 1974, 140-141.

number and your numbering? Do you make God subject to human numbering? Do you then make Him numbered among the creatures and according to number? But this is also blasphemy, idolatry!!! How dare you conflate the Highest One with your 1s, 2s, 3s. So, when we say God is One, He is One not according to human numbering. Can we then argue that God is e.g., A Thousand if this is not referring to numbering as such? No!!! Why? When you say God is One, you are right in that you accept the Prophets and the Saints. But the Holy Scriptures describe God's Epiphanies, and the One God is testified in Three Faces/Persons i.e., in Three Hypostases, One of Whom even appears as an angel and a man in the Old Testament, and above all, in the New Testament in the Theanthropos Jesus Christ Lord. To call God One according to human numbering is equally false, as if you call God Three according to human numbering. The Lydian Stone of living dogma is the Theophanies that testify that God is One yet He is Three; yet neither that One and that Three pertain to human or angelic numbering. For if God was One with regard to human numbering, He would not be able to create the number one (or any other number) as He would have been at the same existential level with the number one as such. When we say Retoulas is one according to human numbering (and that is proper), we immediately mean that, as a creature, Retoulas has naturally an opposite, i.e., which is the *nihil*, zero, nothingness (he is destroyed, is gone, etc). But God is not naturally subject to such a dualism (nor any monism as such for that matter); when we say God is One we do not say that God has as His opposite the *nihil* for God has not existential opposite; He is the creator of the nihil and He cannot be nothing for in Real Being, in Reality, only God really Is; He cannot not be, nor He can oppose Himself. So, from the point of view of us creatures, God is One and not One; or, more 'accurately', God is One in Three, and He is not One in Three.

And there is another issue: the moment one accepts the Perfect Human Being, there is no consistent way to escape acceptance of the Theanthropic nature of its Prototype, the Theanthropic Supreme Barzakh-Mediator, the incarnatable God-Logos. But this is a discussion that will be taken on elsewhere. The reality of Nature constitutes an interrelated theme. Commenting upon Atatürk's utterance that "the religion of the Turks is nature"¹⁹, Baran Aydın aptly identifies its true meaning, that, as he rightly argues, can be understood only by an Akbarian *tasavvufi* person such as the Melami Atatürk. In his brief exegesis of the term, nature (*tabiat*), he finds recourse to Ibn Arabi's cosmology via the writings of the head of the third period *Melamiyye*, Seyyid Muhammad Nur ül-Arabi. As Aydın states,

¹⁹ Aydın 2023.

Atatürk's use of the term pertains to a reality that existed before the Creation of the Cosmos; that reality-state is also referred to as *nefsi küll*. He also tells us that according to Ibn Arabi, "we humans are brothers with this Nature". Indeed, if we look at Ibn Arabi's exegesis of this complex and illusive reality, we see that "Ibn Arabi calls the Supreme Barzakh by several other names, such as the Reality of the Perfect Man and the Muhammadan Reality... one more synonym for the Supreme Barzakh, i.e., Nature"²⁰. Moreover, "Nature is absent in entity from existence, since it has no entity within existence, and from immutability, since it has no entity there"²¹. It is "acted upon by God – through His Command (*amr*) and Word (*kalima*) – or the spirit"²². Even a person with minimum understanding of Romanity would recognise in this description the manner of the manifestation of the Holy Trinity into Creation (the God-Holy Spirit from the God-Father via the God-Logos), the outer Face of God towards Creation, the Theanthropic God-Logos as our Father, Mother and Brother²³, and the reality of that "Nature" that is neither the divine Essence nor anything found in the engendered Creation, i.e., the Storehouse of the Uncreated divine Energies/Operations/Names of *Supraness* – and above all how these dimensions become illusively conflated the more one applies logical categories upon them (as they lie *supra* reason/logic as the roots of reason/logic)²⁴. Now I leave you with a *theosis* experience of Saint Gregory the Theologian (4th century AD):

What is this that I have suffered, O! you friends, initiated ones and co-lovers of the truth? I was running after grasping God and I ascended to the Mountain, I passed through the cloud, and I abandoned matter and the material things and I was condensed within myself as it was possible. Yet when I focused my eyes, I was hardly able to see God's back²⁵, and this under the protection of the Rock, i.e., the Logos Who became man for our sake. And after I bent down a little, *I saw not the primary and pure Nature that is known only to Himself*, i.e. the divine Essence], the Nature that remains in the first veil and is covered up by the keruvim but *the Outer Nature that reaches out to us too*²⁶.

"Our total and unhindered union (after the making anew of our souls and bodies after the Resurrection) with the deified flesh and soul of the Lord

²⁰ Chittick 1989, 139.

²¹ Chittick 1989, 140.

²² Chittick 1989, 140.

²³ Mark 3:33-35.

²⁴ See also Chittick 189, 143.

²⁵ Shemot/Exodus 33:19-23.

²⁶ Saint Gregory the Theologian, PG 36:29A, emphasis ours.

Jesus Christ in what is termed, ‘the Outer Nature’ of God, or, in Saint Dionysius the Aeropagitis’ vivid description:

...the supra-essential Radiance/Ray of the Divine Darkness²⁷.

God’s Nature: the utterly inaccessible infinite Darkness;

God’s ‘Outer Nature’: the infinite partakable divine Energies,

Or, to use a term from Saint Gregory the Theologian, God’s judgements, or, as Saint Maximus the Confessor explains:

[Saint Dionysius the Aeropagitis] calls *πρόοδος* (*proodos*, ‘going out of a place’, ‘procession’) the divine energy that created every essence²⁸,²⁹

HE/WE, HE/WE-he, us mere humans:

Glory to Him who made His servant travel by night [(through death and resurrection *supra*)] from the sacred place of worship[, i.e., the Golgotha/the Temple in Jerusalem before 70 AD] to the furthest place of worship[, i.e. the Heavenly Realms *Supra*], whose surroundings We[, i.e. HE GOD] have blessed[with uncreated energy/operation *supra*], to show him... of Our signs[/evidence/proofs/realities]: H[E/WE-he] alone is the All Hearing, the All Seeing³⁰.

There was neither the Hebrew Temple (having been destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD) nor the *al-Masjid al-Aqṣā* in Jerusalem at the time of Islam’s Prophet Muhammed... The theanthropic Lord Jesus Christ ascending through the night of the world and death taking the whole of the human nature to glorification into the blessed Realms of God? Indeed, the cross-culturation and degree of inter-changeability of the terms for God and His servant are of epic proportion in this verse of the Koran.

It is not out of accident that in his *The Emergence of Islam in Late Antiquity: Allāh and his People*, Aziz al-Azmeh writes even for Islam vis-à-vis its origins – his worldly orientation notwithstanding:

For indeed, it is the case that geographical metaphors of East and West, directly or indirectly, have played an oddly determinant role in the delimitations of Antiquity and Late Antiquity. These, bearers of mutual ‘otherness’, bear within themselves connotations that impede rather than aid the understanding, and famously muddy attempts at understanding

²⁷ Saint Dionysius the Aeropagitis, PG 3:1000A.

²⁸ Saint Maximus the Confessor, PG 4:309A.

²⁹ Retoulas 2022, 306.

³⁰ Koran 17:1 (in Haleem 2005, 175), interpretative insertions ours.

Byzantium, let alone Islam. It will be seen in what follows that *Islam is the end product of the translation of Romanity to the East, considered quite simply as a cardinal point unburdened of culturalist connotations, and that it is within the structures of Romanity that Islam, as it eventually evolved by a process described in this book, found its conditions of possibility: oecumenical empire with the salvific vocation of a monotheist religion, the two articulated symbolically by political theology and a theology of history.* The system was underwritten by an oecumenical currency and urbanism, the whole package now expressed under a new signature and in a different language. In all, it will be suggested that Late Antiquity might benefit from considerations that would reinstate its Romanity, considered as a comprehensive imperial system, as this would restrain the culturalist, classicist interpretative drift written into the 'antiquity' component of this general title³¹.

If anything has come out of my decades long engagement with these matters in this book and others, at least epistemologically, it is coming to understand the impossibility of fully approaching any formulated existential entity, even historically or politically, without having first delved into its doctrinal relations and intricacies with the Divine. Otherwise, we merely substitute our prejudgments for their meanings. This means that any e.g., Roman Christian, or Ottoman Curricula, whether historical or not, must include Orthodox Christian dogmatics and *tasavvufi* Islam respectively – the inverse is also true. Compare, for example, the vast destruction of the Roman Orthodox Monasteries by Frankish hijackers of the Roman Hellenic Revolution of 1821 and their local collaborators with the closure of the Islamic convents (*tekkes*) by the Roman Turkish revolutionary, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Looking at merely the act itself, you might argue that Frankish neo-Greek and Turkish secularism are anticlerical/antimonastic. But you would be deceived and deceiving for if we couple the action with the mentalities and social realities in which they took place, namely, anti-Orthodox Ottonian Catholicism/Protestantism/neo-Gnosticism after 1832, and, as we will see, *vahdet-i vücud tasavvuf* Islam respectively, it will become apparent that the former act sought the extermination of Christianity and Hellenic Romanity while the latter, sought the salvation and re-institution of Ottoman/Turkish Islam and Ottoman/Turkish Romanity. The only valid epistemological posture is the differentiated, non-hierarchically hierarchical unity of Love, Reason and Power as prerequisites of Being and knowledge: Power within Reason, Reason within Love and all within the Uncreated Love of *Supraness*.

³¹ al-Azmeh 2014, 4.

Even though he was not aware of the Roman doctrinal roots of Ottoman/Turkish Islam, Father John Romanides argued,

The views of [the Prophet of Islam,] Muhammad on the Romans (Rum) can be a stable base in the relations between the two peoples[, Romans (Greeks) and Arabs]. The same maybe has validity for those between Turks and Romans [(Greeks)]³².

Indeed, Romanity does not concern only this or that nation, this or that community, this and that person; Romanity concerns the *Ecumene* as a whole, the whole of Humanity, or even more ‘accurately’, the Creation as a whole (visible and invisibly). For He says: «πορευθέντες εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἅπαντα κηρύξατε τὸ εὐαγγέλιον πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει»³³ “Go to all the Cosmos and proclaim the gospel to the whole of Creation”. Although it has the nations of Kitsikis’ *Intermediate Region* as its initial new garden - just as God had the people of the Old Yisra’el as His bearer before Christ - Romanity pertains to everyone and everything. First and foremost, it concerns the Frankish West as the main culprit of its distortion and setting upon the road to extinction – with catastrophic consequence for humanity as *sub* and as a whole. In his brilliant, award-winning exposé, *Aristotle East and West: Metaphysics and The Division of Christendom*, David Bradshaw concludes (which is indeed the best correction to Pope’s summary of Church history):

As for *persecution and religious war*, it is also striking that the major institutions and movements that embodied them *in the West, such as the Crusades, the military orders, and the Inquisition, all arose after the schism*. None of this is to say that the Enlightenment was a success even on its own terms. Voltaire’s dictum - that in a long dispute all parties are wrong - cuts with equal force against the secular philosophies engendered by the Enlightenment, for none has come anywhere near to achieving universal assent. Nor did war and persecution come to an end once the Enlightenment had pulled God from His throne. Two centuries later, we know only too well how effective the progeny of the Enlightenment proved at killing on a massive scale. I leave it to the reader to recall all the bloody wars and revolutions, the hatred, arrogance, and philosophical despair, of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. *From the standpoint of the East the whole story falls sadly into place*. The Enlightenment attacked scholasticism, but left untouched rationalist ideology; it attacked oppressive morality, *but left untouched the alienation of body from soul*; it attacked sectarian strife, but left untouched *the deeper wellsprings of hatred*. We children of the Enlightenment pride ourselves on our willingness to question anything. *Let*

³² Romanides 2002, 235.

³³ Κατά Μάρκον (Mark) 16:15.

*us now ask whether the God who has been the subject of so much strife and contention throughout western history was ever anything more than an idol. We may find that Nietzsche was wrong - that the sun still rises, the horizon still stretches before us, and we have not yet managed to drink up the sea*³⁴.

All in all, the *a la Franka* Augustinian formative substratum permeates Western secular modernity and its epistemology. Then, it involves all those former Roman nations committing adultery with the Frankish West.

As far as other ancient and culturally rich peoples like the Chinese, Alexander Chow's far-sighted book, *Theosis, Sino-Christian Theology and the Second Chinese Enlightenment: Heaven and Humanity in Unity* (2013) constitutes a milestone for the future:

...the theological category of theosis as found in Eastern Orthodoxy is a fairly rich tradition which has had a somewhat different path from Western Christianity. It beckons the discourse in Sino-Christian theology to go beyond the binary opposition of "Chinese culture" versus "Western (Christian) culture," but identifies a possible mediating voice between two multi-faceted systems of thought. It also gives shape to a more comprehensive picture of Christianity, provides interesting possibilities in the contemporary Chinese intellectual context and helps to give an additional resource for Sino-Christian theology to create a Third Space for China today³⁵.

This concerns Chinese Christianity and the direct relation of the Lord Jesus Christ with Taoism³⁶.

Another ancient religious tradition, Hinduism needs to immediately extricate itself from the two-centuries-long coiling of the Western neo-Gnostic serpent and reconnect to Hinduism proper of the time of the Ecclesia of Apostle Thomas, i.e., before the advent of the original Manichaeism in 3rd century AD for, as we have shown extensively elsewhere, the True and Only *Ōm* is:

the Lord Jesus Christ, *ὁ ὢν*, (the ON: the HE WHO IS), or else, the *Εἰμί* *Eimi* (I AM (HE) – sounding at the time of Christ: imi): the God-Logos IC

³⁴ Bradshaw 2006, 276-277, emphasis ours.

³⁵ Chow 2013, 159.

³⁶ In this respect, please see, Hieromonk Damascene's *Christ: The Eternal Tao*. Hieromonk Damascene (Christensen) is a spiritual child of Father Seraphim (Rose) of Platina (1934-1982 AD) (formerly a serious student of Taoism's ancient texts) [<http://deathtotheworld.com/articles/blessed-hieromonk-seraphim-rose/>, accessed Dec. 17th, 2016]. For him, "the Tao Teh Ching is a foreshadowing of what would later be revealed through Christ" (Ibid., p. 68).

XC (ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ, JESUS CHRIST), the EHEYE (ἐγώ, I AM) of the Book of Exodus.

And as Saint Oikoumenios the Wonderworker (10th century AD) writes about the Final Aeon and Perfecting Telos:

Thus, when the rule and reign of the Romans that today impedes [it] cease to exist and comes to an end – it says -, then the lawless, i.e., the Antichrist will be revealed. And when the *archē* of the Romans is broken up, then the Antichrist will impose anarchy and attempt to take control not only over that of the humans but also, over the *archē* that belongs to God. As for the *archē* of the Romans, the Antichrist will destroy it utterly. Just as the Babylonians crushed the *archē* of the Medes, and as the Persians eliminated that of the Babylonians, and as the Macedonians destroyed that of the Persians and as the Romans ruined that of the Macedonians, in such manner the Antichrist will destroy that of the Romans, and the *archē* of the Antichrist will be eradicated by our Master, [the Lord Jesus Christ]. Prophet Daniel writes all these³⁷.

In a prophesy that pertains primarily to the End of Times and secondary to the events of the Roman-Sassanid Wars of the early 7th century, the Koran states:

Alif Lam Mim

The Byzantines [lit. the Romans] have been defeated in a nearby land.

They will reverse their defeat with a victory in a few years' time –

God is in command, first and last.

On that day, the believers will rejoice at God's help.

He helps whoever He pleases: He is the Mighty, the Merciful.

This is God's promise:

God never breaks His promise, but most people do not know;

they only know the outer surface of

this present life and are heedless of the life to come³⁸.

The fulfilment of prophesy in the Roman victories against the Persians at that time guarantees that the future dimension of the prophesy will also be fulfilled...

When Artificial Intelligence will read your thoughts, depict your dreams, and mimic your emotions, for your own good of course... the only place left for you to live freely and undetected will be the inner chamber of your noeric heart within your body, drenched round about in the

³⁷ Oecumenii, Triccae in Thessalia Episcopi, PG 119, 121-2, AB.

³⁸ Koran 30:1-7 (in Haleem 2005, 257).

impregnable waters of the Holy Spirit; only those who know how to lower the faculty of thought into the heart that beats in the centre of the chest: Body within the Mind, Mind within the Heart. Not only over the Mind, but over round about, so that the Mind Breaths to the degree the Heart permits. For He says,

σὺ δὲ ὅταν προσεύχῃ, εἰσελθε εἰς τὸ ταμεῖόν σου καὶ κλείσας τὴν θύραν σου
πρόσευξαι τῷ Πατρὶ σου τῷ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ· καὶ ὁ Πατήρ σου ὁ βλέπων ἐν
τῷ κρυπτῷ ἀποδώσει σοι³⁹.

Thus, "if you want to become uncreatedly *supra*, so,

...that Christ may dwell in your hearts through [uncreatedly energized and energizing] faith⁴⁰,

then,

become compacted within your nous (σύννοος), disliking being [noerically/intelligibly] detectible (ἀφιλένδεικτος) [even by the intelligible creatures and their created energies] and in ecstasy towards your heart. Really, the demons fear the condensation within the nous (σύννοια), as thieves fear dogs⁴¹.⁴²

Otherwise, outside the Supraness of divine uncreated energy/operation, i.e., only in the world of metaphysics and physics, as the great Roman Türk says in his, *Dîvân-ı Kebîr*, or else, *Dîvân-ı Şems-i Tebrizî*:

What is *the body* in the face of the happiness of His Love and His sunshine?
Dust.
And *the spirit*?
Steam⁴³.

Thus,

Ἄν δέν γίνεις τελεία,
δέν μπορεῖς νά γίνεις τέλειος⁴⁴.

³⁹ Matthew 6:9: "But you, when you pray, go into your inner chamber, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who *is* in the secret *place*; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly."

⁴⁰ Ephesians 3:17.

⁴¹ Saint John Climacus 2014, 143.

⁴² Retoulas 2022, 181.

⁴³ I particularly thank Spyridon Melas of Kazan University (Russia) for this reference.

⁴⁴ Retoulas 2022, 96.

Unless you become a full-stop in the Holy Trinity One God,
 You cannot become complete/perfect/fulfilled aeonian-ly into static
 movement and moving stasis.

The full-stop that is the beginning, the telos Who is the Archē of all
 Being.

The LORD created[/gotten/begotten/acquired/formed/possessed (קָנַן
 (*qanani*)⁴⁵] me as the beginning of his way, the first/[front/face/before of
 old/before/east/eastward קֵדֶם (*qedem*)] of his works of old. I was set up from
 everlasting, from the beginning, before ever the earth was... then I was by
 him [(a joining together)], as a nurseling [גִּזְלָן, a master builder/ an
 architect/a supporting] : and I was daily his delight, playing[/rejoicing]
 always before him ; playing[/rejoicing] with the universe, his earth ; and my
 delights were with the sons of men⁴⁶.

For

The exoteric/manifestation of *Hakikat-i Muhammediyye*
 is the telos of all creation/innateness⁴⁷.

Aşkın söyletir beni
 Feryat, feryat
 Dilin söyletir beni
 Feryat, feryat⁴⁸.

In the Archē was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God.
 He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and
 without Him nothing was made that was made⁴⁹...

And the Logos became flesh and dwelt among us,
 and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,
 full of grace and truth⁵⁰.

No one has seen God at any time.

The only begotten Son,
 who is in the bosom of the Father,

⁴⁵ Only in Proverbs 8:22, from the verb קָנַן (*qanah*). Compare with a begetting of an
 essence from a same essence (human from human): “And the man knew Havva his wife;
 and she conceived, and bore Qayin saying, I have acquired[/begotten/gotten/given birth
 קָנִיתִי (*qaniti*) from the verb קָנַן (*qanah*)] a man child from the LORD.”
 (Bereshit/Genesis 4:1).

⁴⁶ Mishle/Proverbs 8:22-31.

⁴⁷ Elmalılı Muhammed Hamdi. *Hak Dini, Kur'an Dili* (I, 575-576; VII, 4937-4938).

⁴⁸ Müslüm Gürses/Selahattin Sarıkaya.

⁴⁹ John 1:1-3 (with intercalary Greek terms).

⁵⁰ John 1:14 (with intercalary Greek terms).

He has declared *Him*.⁵¹

The Lord Jesus Christ:

The *Imago mundi*, the *Axis mundi par excellence*⁵²;

You are, O! my Christ, earth and sea and pole⁵³.

As for us,

Remember Lot's wife.⁵⁴

⁵¹ John 1:18 (with intercalary Greek terms).

⁵² Baghos 2021, xvi.

⁵³ John Geometres 2012, 49 (10th century AD).

⁵⁴ Luke 17:32.

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